TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER THE

SOURCE OF THE NILE.

GR III
BRITISH MUSEUM

147 g 3.

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER THE

SOURCE OF THE NILE,

In the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES BRUCE OF KINNAIRD, ESQ. F.R.S.

VOL. III.

Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem,
Occuluitque caput, quod adhuc latet.——
Ovid. Metam.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY J. RUTHVEN,
FOR G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW,
LONDON.

M.DCC.XC.

CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

BOOK V.

ACCOUNT OF MY JOURNEY FROM MASUAH TO GONDAR—TRANSACTIONS THERE—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ABYSSINIANS.

CHAP. I.

Tranſactions at Maſuah and Arkeeko, P. 1

CHAP. II.

Directions to Travellers for preſerving Health—Diſeaſes of the Country—Muſic—Trade, &c. *of Maſuah—Conferences with the Naybe.* 31

CHAP. III.

Journey from Arkeeko over the Mountain Taranta, to Dixan, P. 64

CHAP. IV.

Journey from Dixan to Adowa, Capital of Tigré, 93

CHAP. V.

Arrive at Adowa—Reception there—Viſit Fremona—And Ruins of Axum—Arrive at Siré, 118

CHAP. VI.

Journey from Siré to Addergey, and Tranſactions there, 152

CHAP. VII.

Journey over Lamalmon to Gondar, 172

CHAP. VIII.

Reception at Gondar—Triumphal Entry of the King—The Author's firſt Audience, P. 197

CHAP. IX.

Tranſactions at Gondar, 233

CHAP. X.

Geographical Diviſion of Abyſſinia into Provinces, 248

CHAP. XI.

Various Cuſtoms in Abyſſinia, ſimilar to thoſe in Perſia, &c.—*A bloody Banquet deſcribed,* &c. 262

CHAP. XII.

State of Religion—Circumciſion—Exciſion, &c. 313

BOOK VI.

FIRST ATTEMPT TO DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF THE NILE FRUSTRATED—A SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY THITHER, WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF EVERY THING RELATING TO THAT CELEBRATED RIVER.

CHAP. I.

The Author made Governor of Ras el Feel, P. 359

CHAP. II.

Battle of Banja—Conſpiracy againſt Michael—The Author retires to Emfras—Deſcription of Gondar, Emfras, and Lake Tzana, 373

CHAP. III.

The King encamps at Langué—Tranſactions there—Paſſes the Nile, and encamps at Derdera—The Author follows the King, 389

CHAP. IV.

Paſs the River Gomara—Remarkable Accident there—Arrive at Dara

Dara—Viſit the Great Cataract of Alata—Leave Dara, and reſume our Journey, P. 405

CHAP. V.

Paſs the Nile, and encamp at Tſoomwa—Arrive at Derdera—Alarm on approaching the Army—Join the King at Karcagna, 432

CHAP. VI.

King's Army retreats towards Gondar—Memorable Paſſage of the Nile—Dangerous Situation of the Army—Retreat of Keſla Yaſous—Battle of Limjour—Unexpected Peace with Faſil—Arrival at Gondar, 446

CHAP. VII.

King and Army retreat to Tigrè—Intereſting Events following that Retreat—The Body of Joas is found—Socinios, a new King, proclaimed at Gondar, 470

CHAP. VIII.

Second Journey to diſcover the Source of the Nile—Favourable turn of

the

the King's Affairs in Tigrè—We fall in with Faſil's Army at Bamba, P. 495

CHAP. IX.

Interview with Faſil—Tranſactions in the Camp, 509

CHAP. X.

Leave Bamba, and contiuue our Journey Southward—Fall in with Faſil's Pagan Galla—Encamp on the Kelti. 532

CHAP. XI.

Continue our Journey—Fall in with a Party of Galla—Prove our Friends—Paſs the Nile—Arrive at Goutto, and viſit the firſt Cataract, 550

CHAP. XII.

Leave Goutto—Mountains of the Moon—Roguery of Woldo our Guide—Arrive at the Source of the Nile. 577

CHAP. XIII.

Attempts of be Ancients to diſcover the Source of the Nile—No diſcovery

very made in latter Times—No Evidence of the Jeſuits having arrived there—Kircher's Account fabulous—Diſcovery completely made by the Author, 603

CHAP. XIV.

Deſcription of the Sources of the Nile—Of Geeſh—Accounts of its ſeveral Cataracts—Courſe from its Riſe to the Mediterranean, 632

CHAP. XV.

Various names of this River---Ancient Opinion concerning the Cauſe of its Inundation—Real Manner by which it is effected—Remarkable Diſpoſition of the Peninſula of Africa, 654

CHAP. XVI.

Egypt not the Gift of the Nile—Ancient Opinion refuted—Moaern Opinion contrary to Proof and Experience, 672

CHAP. XVII.

The ſame Subject continued—Nilometer what---How divided and meaſured, 689

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

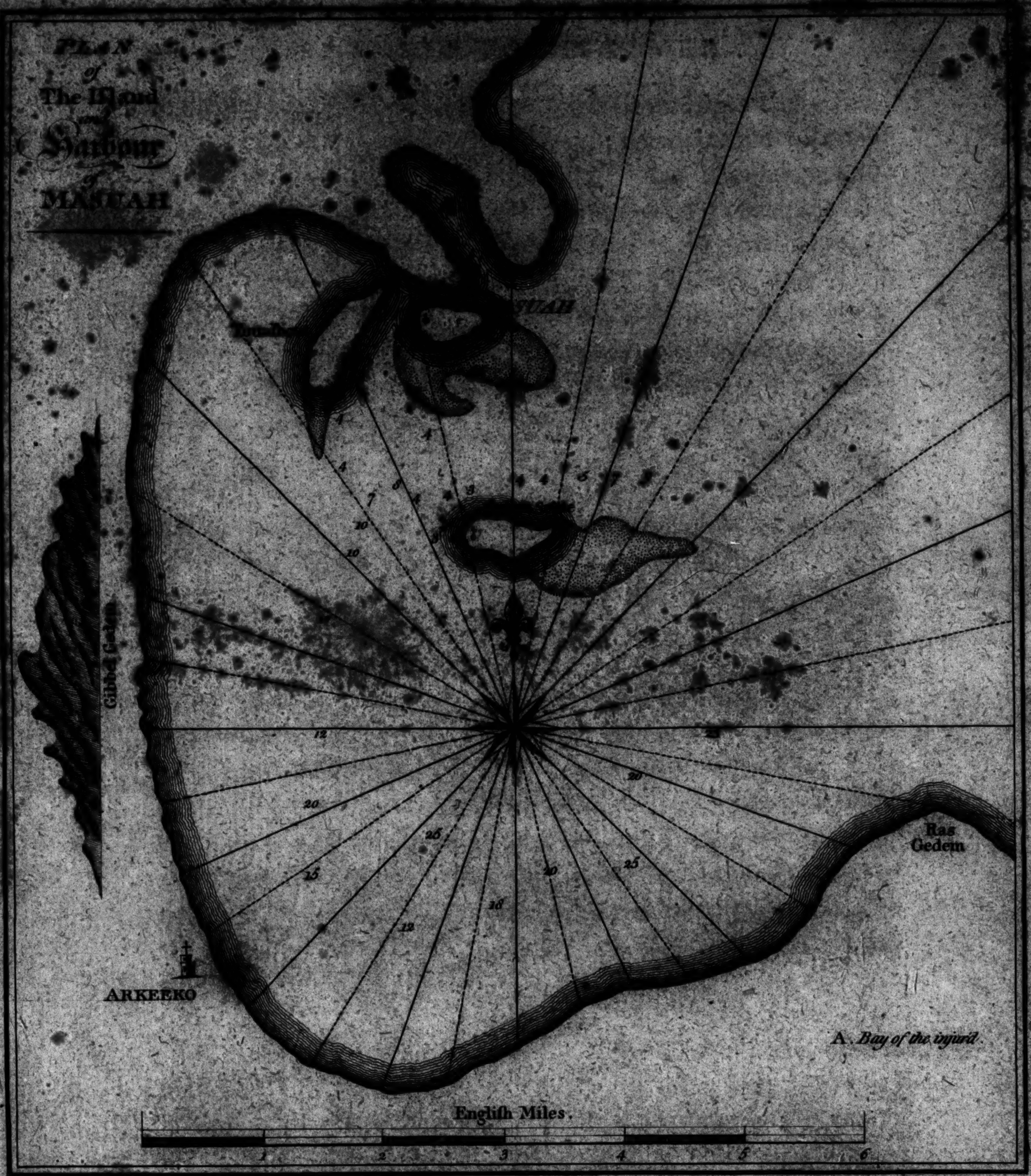
Inquiry about the Poſſibility of changing the Courſe of the Nile—Cauſe of the Nucta, P. 712

CHAP. XIX.

Kind reception among the Agows—Their Number, Trade, Character, &c. 726

TRAVELS

G III
BRITISH MUSEUM


PLAN
of
The Island
and
Harbour
of
MASUAH
SUAH
Gibbel Gedam
ARKEEKO
Ras
Gedem
A. Bay of the injur'd
English Miles
1
2
3
4
5
6

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

BOOK V.

ACCOUNT OF MY JOURNEY FROM MASUAH TO GONDAR—TRANSACTIONS THERE—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ABYSSINIANS.

CHAP. I.

Tranſactions at Maſuah and Arkeeko.

MASUAH, which means the port or harbour of the Shepherds, is a ſmall iſland immediately on the Abyſſinian ſhore, having an excellent harbour, and water deep enough for ſhips of any ſize to the very edge of the iſland: here they may ride in the utmoſt ſecurity, from whatever point, or with whatever degree of ſtrength, the wind blows. As it takes its modern, ſo it received its ancient name from its harbour. It was called by the Greeks *Sebaſticum Os*, from the capacity of its port, which is diſtributed into three diviſions. The iſland itſelf is very ſmall, ſcarce three quarters of a mile in length, and about half that in breadth, one-third occupied by houſes, one by ciſterns to receive the rain-water, and the laſt is reſerved for burying the dead.

Masuah, as we have already obſerved, was one of thoſe towns on the weſt of the Red Sea that followed the conqueſt of Arabia Felix by Sinan Baſha, under Selim emperor of Conſtantinople. At that time it was a place of great commerce, poſſeſſing a ſhare of the Indian trade in common with the other ports of the Red Sea near the mouth of the Indian Ocean. It had a conſiderable quantity of exports brought to it from a great tract of mountainous country behind it, in all ages very unhoſpitable, and almoſt inacceſſible to ſtrangers. Gold and ivory, elephants and buffaloes hides, and, above all, ſlaves, of much greater value, as being more ſought after for their perſonal qualities than any other ſort, who had the misfortune to be reduced to that condition, made the principal articles of exportation from this port. Pearls, conſiderable for ſize, water, or colour, were found all along its coaſt. The great convenience of commodious riding for veſſels, joined to theſe valuable articles of trade, had overcome the inconvenience of want of water, the principal neceſſary of life, to which it had been ſubjected from its creation.

Masuah continued a place of much reſort as long as commerce flouriſhed, but it fell into obſcurity very ſuddenly under the oppreſſion of the Turks, who put the finiſhing-hand to the ruin of the India trade in the Red Sea, begun ſome years before by the diſcovery of the Cape of Good

Hope, and the ſettlements made by the Portugueſe on the continent of India.

The firſt government of Maſuah under the Turks was by a baſha ſent from Conſtantinople, and from thence, for a time, the conqueſt of Abyſſinia was attempted, always with great confidence, though never with any degree of ſucceſs; ſo that, loſing its value as a garriſon, and, at the ſame time, as a place of trade, it was thought no longer worth while to keep up ſo expenſive an eſtabliſhment as that of a baſhalik.

The principal auxiliary, when the Turks conquered the place, was a tribe of Mahometans called Belowee, ſhepherds inhabiting the coaſt of the Red Sea under the mountains of the Habab, about lat. 14°. In reward for this aſſiſtance, the Turks gave their chief the civil government of Maſuah and its territory, under the title of Naybe of Maſuah; and, upon the baſha's being withdrawn, this officer remained in fact ſovereign of the place, though, to ſave appearances, he held it of the grand ſignior for an annual tribute, upon receiving a firman from the Ottoman Porte.

The body of Janizaries, once eſtabliſhed there in garriſon, were left in the iſland, and their pay continued to them from Conſtantinople. Theſe marrying the women of the country, their children ſucceeded them in their place and pay as Janizaries; but being now, by their intermarriages, Moors, and natives of Maſuah, they became of courſe relations to each other, and always ſubject to the influence of the Naybe.

The Naybe finding the great diſtance he was from his protectors, the Turks in Arabia, on the other ſide of the Red Sea, whoſe garriſons were every day decaying in ſtrength, and for the moſt part reduced; ſenſible, too, how much he was in the power of the Abyſſinians, his enemies and neareſt neighbours, began to think that it was better to ſecure himſelf at home, by making ſome advances to thoſe in whoſe power he was. Accordingly it was agreed between them, that one half of the cuſtoms ſhould be paid by him to the king of Abyſſinia, who was to ſuffer him to enjoy his government unmoleſted; for Maſuah, as I have before ſaid, is abſolutely deſtitute of water; neither can it be ſupplied with any ſort of proviſions but from the mountainous country of Abyſſinia.

The ſame may be ſaid of Arkeeko, a large town on the bottom of the bay of Maſuah, which has indeed water, but labours under the ſame ſcarcity of proviſions; for the tract of flat land behind both, called Samhar, is a perfect deſert, and only inhabited from the month of November to April, by a variety of wandering tribes called Tora, Hazorta, Shiho, and Doba, and theſe carry all their cattle to the Abyſſinian ſide of the mountains when the rains fall there, which is the oppoſite ſix months. When the ſeaſon is thus reverſed, they and their cattle are no longer in Samhar, or the dominion of the Naybe, but in the hands of the Abyſſinians, eſpecially the governor of Tigré and Baharnagaſh, who thereby, without being at the expence and trouble of marching againſt Maſuah with an army, can make a line round it, and ſtarve all at Arkeeko and Maſuah, by prohibiting any ſort of proviſions to be carried thither from their ſide. In the courſe of this hiſtory we have ſeen this practiſed with great ſucceſs more than once, eſpecially againſt the Naybe Muſa in the reign of Yaſous I.

The friendſhip of Abyſſinia once ſecured, and the power of the Turks declining daily in Arabia, the Naybe began by degrees to withdraw himſelf from paying tribute at all to the baſha of Jidda, to whoſe government his had been annexed by the porte. He therefore received the firman as a mere form, and returned trifling preſents, but no tribute; and in troubleſome times, or a weak government happening in Tigrè, he withdrew himſelf equally from paying any conſideration, either to the baſha in name of tribute, or to the king of Abyſſinia, as ſhare of the cuſtoms. This was preciſely his ſituation when I arrived in Abyſſinia. A great revolution, as we have already ſeen, had happened in that kingdom, of which Michael had been the principal author. When he was called to Gondar and made miniſter there, Tigré remained drained of troops, and without a governor.

Nor was the new king, Hatzè Hannes, whom Michael had placed upon the throne after the murder of Joas his predeceſſor, a man likely to infuſe vigour into the new government. Hannes was paſt ſeventy at his acceſſion, and Michael his miniſter lame, ſo as ſcarcely to be able to ſtand, and within a few years of eighty. The Naybe, a man of about forty-eight, judged of the debility of the Abyſſinian government by thoſe circumſtances, but in this he was miſtaken.

Already Michael had intimated to him, that, the next campaign, he would lay waſte Arkeeko and Maſuah, till they ſhould be as deſert as the wilds of Samhar; and as he had been all his life very remarkable for keeping his promiſes of this kind, the ſtranger merchants had many of them fled to Arabia, and others to Dobarwa *, a large town in the territories of the Baharnagaſh. Notwithſtanding this, the Naybe had not ſhewn any public mark of fear, nor ſent one penny either to the king of Abyſſinia or the baſha of Jidda.

On the other hand, the baſha was not indifferent to his own intereſt; and, to bring about the payment, he had made an agreement with an officer of great credit with the Sherriffe of Mecca. This man was originally an Abyſſinian ſlave, his name Metical Aga, who by his addreſs had raiſed himſelf to the poſt of Selictar, or *ſword-bearer*, to the Sherriffe; and, in fact, he was abſolute in all his dominions. He was, moreover, a great friend of Michael governor of Tigré, and had ſupplied him with large ſtores of arms and ammunition for his laſt campaign againſt the king at Gondar.

The baſha had employed Metical Aga to inform Michael of the treatment he had received from the Naybe, deſiring his aſſiſtance to force him to pay the tribute, and at the ſame time intimated to the Naybe, that he not only had done ſo, but the very next year would give orders throughout Arabia to arreſt the goods and perſons of ſuch Mahometan merchants as ſhould come to Arabia, either from motives of religion or trade. With this meſſage he had ſent the firman from Conſtantinople, deſiring the return both of tribute and preſents.

---

* Suppoſed from its name to have been formerly the capital of the Dobas.

Mahomet Gibberti, Metical Aga's ſervant, had come in the boat with me; but Abdelcader, who carried the meſſage and firman, and who was governor of the iſland of Dahalac, had ſailed at ſame time with me, and had been ſpectator of the honour which was paid my ſhip when ſhe left the harbour of Jidda.

Running ſtraight over to Maſuah, Abdelcader had proclaimed what he had ſeen with great exaggeration, according to the cuſtom of his country; and reported that a prince was coming, a very near relation to the king of England, who was no trader, but came only to viſit countries and people.

It was many times, and oft agitated (as we knew afterwards) between the Naybe and his counſellors, what was to be done with this prince. Some were for the moſt expeditious, and what has long been the moſt cuſtomary method of treating ſtrangers in Maſuah, to put them to death, and divide every thing they had among the garriſon. Others inſiſted, that they ſhould ſtay and ſee what letters I had from Arabia to Abyſſinia, leſt this might prove an addition to the ſtorm juſt ready to break upon them on the part of Metical Aga and Michael Suhul.

But Achmet, the Naybe's nephew, ſaid, it was folly to doubt but that a man, under the deſcription I was, would have protections of every kind; but whether I had or not, that my very rank ſhould protect me in every place where there was any government whatever; it might do even among banditti and thieves inhabiting woods and mountains; that a ſufficient quantity of ſtrangers blood had been already ſhed at Maſuah, for the purpoſe of rapine, and he believed a curſe and poverty had followed it; that it was impoſſible for thoſe who had heard the firing of thoſe ſhips to conjecture whether I had letters to Abyſſinia or not; that it would be better to conſider whether I was held in eſteem by the captains of thoſe ſhips, as half of the guns they fired in compliment to me, was ſufficient to deſtroy them all, and lay Arkeeko and Maſuah as deſolate as Michael Suhul had threatned to do; nor could that vengeance coſt any of the ſhips, coming next year to Jidda, a day's ſailing out of their way; and there being plenty of water when they reached Arkeeko at the ſouth-weſt of the bay, all this deſtruction might be effected in one afternoon, and repeated once a-year without difficulty, danger, or expence, while they were watering.

ACHMET, therefore, declared it was his reſolution that I ſhould be received with marks of conſideration, till upon inſpecting my letters, and converſing with me, they might ſee what ſort of man I was, and upon what errand I was come; but even if I was a trader, and no prieſt or Frank, ſuch as came to diſturb the peace of the country, he would not then conſent to any perſonal injury being done me; if I was indeed a prieſt, or one of thoſe Franks, *Gehennim*, they might ſend me to hell if they choſe; but he, for his part, would not, even then have any thing to do with it.

BEFORE our veſſel appeared, they came to theſe concluſions; and though I have ſuppoſed that hoiſting the colours and ſaluting me with guns had brought me into this danger, on the other hand it may be ſaid, perhaps with greater reaſon, they were the means Providence kindly uſed to ſave my life in that ſlaughter-houſe of ſtrangers.

Achmet's father had been Naybe before, and, of courſe, the ſovereignty, upon the preſent incumbent's death, was to devolve on him. And what made this leſs invidious, the ſons of the preſent Naybe had all been ſwept away by the ſmall-pox; ſo that Achmet was really, at any rate, to be conſidered as his ſon and ſucceſſor. Add to this, the Naybe had received a ſtroke of the palſy, which deprived him of the uſe of one of his ſides, and greatly impeded his activity, unleſs in his ſchemes of doing ill; but I could not perceive, when intending miſchief, that he laboured under any infirmity. All this gave Achmet ſovereign influence, and it was therefore agreed the reſt ſhould be only ſpectators, and that my fate ſhould be left to him.

Achmet was about twenty-five years of age, or perhaps younger; his ſtature near five-feet four; he was feebly made, a little bent forward or ſtooping, thin, long-faced, long-necked; ſmall, but tolerably well-limbed, agile and active enough in his motions, though of a figure by no means athletic; he had a broad forehead, thick black eye-brows, black eyes, an aquiline noſe, thin lips, and fine teeth; and, what is very rare in that country, and much deſired, a thick curled beard. This man was known to be very brave in his perſon, but exceedingly prone to anger. A near relation to the Baharnagaſh having ſaid ſomething impertinent to him while he was altering the pin of his tent, which his ſervant had not placed to his mind, in a paſſion he ſtruck the Abyſſinian with a wooden mallet, and killed him on the ſpot and although this was in the Abyſſinian territory, by getting nimbly on horſeback, he arrived at Arkeeko without being intercepted, though cloſely purſued almoſt to the town.

It was the 19th of September 1769 when we arrived at Maſuah, very much tired of the ſea, and deſirous to land. But, as it was evening, I thought it adviſeable to ſleep on board all night, that we might have a whole day (as the firſt is always a buſy one) before us, and receive in the night any intelligence from friends, who might not chooſe to venture to come openly to ſee us in the day, at leaſt before the determination of the Naybe had been heard concerning us.

Mahomet Gibberti, a man whom we had perfectly ſecured, and who was fully inſtructed in our ſuſpicions as to the Naybe, and the manner we had reſolved to behave to him, went aſhore that evening; and, being himſelf an Abyſſinian, having connections in Maſuah, diſpatched that ſame night to Adowa, capital of Tigrè, thoſe letters which I knew were to be of the greateſt importance; giving our friend Janni (a Greek, confidential ſervant of Michael, governor of Tigrè) advice that we were arrived, had letters of Metical Aga to the Naybe and Ras Michael; as alſo Greek letters to him from the Greek patriarch of Cairo, a duplicate of which I ſent by the bearer. We wrote likewiſe to him in Greek, that we were afraid of the Naybe, and begged him to ſend to us inſtantly ſome man of confidence, who might protect us, or at leaſt be a ſpectator of what ſhould befal us. We, beſides, inſtructed him to adviſe the court of Abyſſinia, that we were friends of Metical Aga, had letters from him to the king and the Ras, and diſtruſted the Naybe of Maſuah.

Mahomet Gibberti executed this commiſſion in the inſtant, with all the punctuality of an honeſt man, who was faithful to the inſtructions of his maſter, and was independent of every perſon elſe. He applied to Mahomet Adulai, (a perſon kept by Ras Michael as a ſpy upon the Naybe, and in the ſame character by Metical Aga); and Adulai, that very night, diſpatched a truſty meſſenger, with many of whom he was conſtantly provided. This runner, charged with our diſpatches, having a friend and correſpondent of his own among the Shiho, paſſed, by ways beſt known to himſelf, and was ſafely eſcorted by his own friends till the fifth day, when he arrived at the cuſtomhouſe of Adowa, and there delivered our diſpatches to our friend Janni.

At Cairo, as I have already mentioned, I met with my friend father Chriſtopher, who introduced me to the Greek patriarch, Mark. This patriarch had told me, that there were of his communion, to the number of about twenty, then in Abyſſinia; ſome of them were good men and becoming rich in the way of trade; ſome of them had fled from the ſeverity of the Turks, after having been detected by them in intimacy with Mahometan women; but all of them were in a great degree of credit at the court of Abyſſinia, and poſſeſſing places under government greatly beyond his expectation. To theſe he wrote letters, in the manner of bulls from the pope, enjoining them, with regard to me, to obey his orders ſtrictly, the particulars of which I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of afterwards.

Janni, then at Adowa in Tigré, was a man of the firſt character for good life and morals. He had ſerved two kings of Abyſſinia with great reputation, and Michael had appointed him to the cuſtomhouſe at Adowa, to ſuperintend the affairs of the revenue there, while he himſelf was occupied at Gondar. To him the patriarch gave his firſt injunctions as to watching the motives of the Naybe, and preventing any ill-uſage from him, before the notice of my arrival at Maſuah ſhould reach Abyſſinia.

Mahomet Adulai diſpatched his meſſenger, and Mahomet Gibberti repaired that ſame night to the Naybe at Arkeeko, with ſuch diligence that lulled him aſleep as to any prior intelligence, which otherwiſe he might have thought he was charged to convey to Tigrè; and Mahomet Gibberti, in his converſation that night with Achmet, adroitly confirmed him in all the ideas he himſelf had firſt ſtarted in council with the Naybe. He told him the manner I had been received at Jidda, my protection at Conſtantinople, and the firman which I brought from the grand ſignior, the power of my countrymen in the Red Sea and India, and my perſonal friendſhip with Metical Aga. He moreover inſinuated, that the coaſts of the Red Sea would be in a dangerous ſituation if any thing happened to me, as both the ſherriffe of Mecca and emperor of Conſtantinople would themſelves, perhaps, not interfere, but would moſt certainly conſider the place, where ſuch diſobedience ſhould be ſhewn to their commands, as in a ſtate of anarchy, and therefore to be abandoned to the juſt correction of the Engliſh, if injured.

On the 20th, a perſon came from Mahomet Gibberti to conduct me on ſhore. The Naybe himſelf was ſtill at Arkeeko, and Achmet therefore had come down to receive the duties of the merchandiſe on board the veſſel which brought me. There were two elbow-chairs placed in the middle of the market-place. Achmet ſat on one of them, while the ſeveral officers opened the bales and packages before him; the other chair on his left hand was empty.

He was dreſſed all in white, in a long Banian habit of muſlin, and a cloſe-bodied frock reaching to his ancles, much like the white frock and petticoat the young children wear in England. This ſpecies of dreſs did not, in any way, ſuit Achmet's ſhape or ſize; but, it ſeems, he meant to be in gala. As ſoon as I came in ſight of him, I doubled my pace: Mahomet Gibberti's ſervant whiſpered to me, not to kiſs his hand; which indeed I intended to have done. Achmet ſtood up, juſt as I arrived within arm's length of him; when we touched each other's hands, carried our fingers to our lips, then laid our hands croſs our breaſts: I pronounced the ſalutation of the inferior *Salam Alicum!* Peace be between us; to which he anſwered immediately, *Alicum Salam!* There is peace between us. He pointed to the chair, which I declined; but he obliged me to ſit down.

In theſe countries, the greater honour that is ſhewn you at firſt meeting, the more conſiderable preſent is expected. He made a ſign to bring coffee directly, as the immediate offering of meat or drink is an aſſurance your life is not in danger. He began with an air that ſeemed rather ſerious: "We have expected you here ſome time ago, but thought you had changed your mind, and was gone to India."—"Since ſailing from Jidda, I have been in Arabia Felix, the Gulf of Mocha, and croſſed laſt from Loheia."—"Are you not afraid," ſaid he, "ſo thinly attended, to venture upon theſe long and dangerous voyages?"—"The countries where I have been are either ſubject to the emperor of Conſtantinople, whoſe firman I have now the honour to preſent you, or to the regency of Cairo, and port of Janizaries—here are their letters—or to the ſherriffe of Mecca. To you, Sir, I preſent the ſherriffe's letters; and, beſides theſe, one from Metigal Aga your friend, who, depending on your character, aſſured me this alone would be ſufficient to preſerve me from ill-uſage ſo long as I did no wrong: as for the dangers of the road from banditti and lawleſs perſons, my ſervants are indeed few, but they are veteran ſoldiers, tried and exerciſed from their infancy in arms, and I value not the ſuperior number of cowardly and diſorderly perſons."

He then returned me the letters, ſaying, "You will give theſe to the Naybe to-morrow; I will keep Metical's letter, as it is to me, and will read it at home." He put it accordingly in his boſom; and our coffee being done, I roſe to take my leave, and was preſently wet to the ſkin by deluges of orange flower-water ſhowered upon me from the right and left, by two of his attendants, from ſilver bottles.

A very decent houſe had been provided; and I had no ſooner entered, than a large dinner was ſent us by Achmet, with a profuſion of lemons, and good freſh water, now become one of the greateſt delicacies in life; and, inſtantly after, our baggage was all ſent unopened; with which I was very well-pleaſed, being afraid they might break ſomething in my clock, teleſcopes, or quadrant, by the violent manner in which they ſatisfy their curioſity.

Late at night I received a viſit from Achmet; he was then in an undreſs, his body quite naked, a barracan thrown looſely about him; he had a pair of calico drawers; a white coul, or cotton cap, upon his head, and had no ſort of arms whatever. I roſe up to meet him, and thank him for his civility in ſending my baggage; and when I obſerved, beſides, that it was my duty to wait upon him, rather than ſuffer him to give himſelf this trouble, he took me by the hand, and we ſat down on two cuſhions together.

"All that you mentioned," ſaid he, "is perfectly good and well; but there are queſtions that I am going to aſk you which are of conſequence to yourſelf. When you arrived at Jidda, we heard it was a great man, a ſon or brother of a king, going to India. This was communicated to me, and to the Naybe, by people that ſaw every day the reſpect paid to you by the captains of the ſhips at Jidda. Metical Aga, in his private letter delivered to the Naybe laſt night by Mahomet Gibberti, among many unuſual expreſſions, ſaid, The day that any accident befals this perſon will be looked upon by me always as the moſt unfortunate of my life. Now, you are a Chriſtian, and he is a Muſſulman, and theſe are expreſſions of a particular regard not uſed by the one when writing of the other. He ſays, moreover, that, in your firman, the grand ſignior ſtiles you Bey-Adzé, or Moſt Noble. Tell me, therefore, and tell me truly, Are you a prince, ſon, brother, or nephew of a king? Are you baniſhed from your own country; and what is it that you ſeek in our's, expoſing yourſelf to ſo many difficulties and dangers?"

"I am neither ſon, nor brother of a king. I am a private Engliſhman. If you, Sidi Achmet, ſaw my prince, the eldeſt, or any ſon of the king of England, you would then be able to form a juſter idea of them, and that would for ever hinder you from confounding them with common men like me. If they were to chooſe to appear in this part of the world, this little ſea would be too narrow for their ſhips: Your ſun, now ſo hot, would be darkened by their ſails; and when they fired their terrible wide-mouthed cannon, not an Arab would think himſelf ſafe on the diſtant mountains, while the houſes on the ſhore would totter and fall to the ground as if ſhaken to pieces by an earthquake. I am a ſervant to that king, and an inferior one in rank; only worthy of his attention from my affection to him and his family, in which I do not acknowledge any superior. Yet ſo far your correſpondents ſay well: My anceſtors were the kings of the country in which I was born, and to be ranked among the greateſt and moſt glorious that ever bore the crown and title of King. This is the truth, and nothing but the truth. I may now, I hope, without offence, aſk, To what does all this information tend?"

"To your ſafety," ſaid he, "and to your honour, as long as I command in Maſuah;—to your certain death and deſtruction if you go among the Abyſſinians; a people without faith, covetous, barbarous, and in continual war, of which nobody yet has been able to diſcover the reaſon. But of this another time."

"Be it ſo," ſaid I. "I would now ſpeak one word in ſecret to you, (upon which every body was ordered out of the room): All that you have told me this evening I already know; aſk me not how: but, to convince you that it is truth, I now thank you for the humane part you took againſt theſe bloody intentions others had of killing and plundering me on my arrival, upon Abdelcader governor of Dahalac's information that I was a prince, becauſe of the nour that the Engliſh ſhips paid me, and that I was loaded with gold."

Ullah Acbar! (in great ſurpriſe) "Why, you was in the middle of the ſea when that paſſed."

"Scarcely advanced ſo far, I believe; but your advice was wiſe, for a large Engliſh ſhip will wait for me all this winter in Jidda, till I know what reception I meet here, or in Abyſſinia. It is a 64 gun ſhip; its name, the Lion; its captain, Thomas Price. I mention theſe particulars, that you may inquire into the truth. Upon the firſt news of a diſaſter he would come here, and deſtroy Arkeeko, and this iſland, in a day. But this is not my buſineſs with you at preſent.

It is a very proper cuſtom, eſtabliſhed all over the eaſt, that ſtrangers ſhould make an acknowledgement for the protection they receive, and trouble they are to occaſion. I have a preſent for the Naybe, whoſe temper and diſpoſition I know perfectly,—(Ullah Acbar! repeats Achmet).—I have likewiſe a preſent for you, and for the Kaya of the Janizaries; all theſe I ſhall deliver the firſt day I ſee the Naybe; but I was taught, in a particular manner, to repoſe upon you as my friend, and a ſmall, but ſeparate acknowledgement, is due to you in that character. I was told, that your agent at Jidda had been inquiring everywhere among the India ſhips, and at the broker of that nation, for a pair of Engliſh piſtols, for which he offered a very high price; though, in all probability, thoſe you would get would have been but ordinary, and much uſed; now I have brought you this ſeparate preſent, a pair of excellent workmanſhip;

here

here they are: my doubt, which gave riſe to this long private converſation, was, whether you would take them home yourſelf; or, if you have a confidential ſervant that you can truſt, let him take them, ſo that it be not known; for if the Naybe"——

"I UNDERSTAND every thing that you ſay, and every thing that you would ſay. Though I do not know men's hearts that I never ſaw, as you do, I know pretty well the hearts of thoſe with whom I live. Let the piſtols remain with you, and ſhew them to nobody till I ſend you a man to whom you may ſay any thing, and he ſhall go between you and me; for there is in this place a number of devils, not men; but, *Ullah Kerim*, God is great. The perſon that brings you dry dates in an Indian handkerchief, and an earthen bottle to drink your water out of, give him the piſtols. You may ſend by him to me any thing you chooſe. In the mean time, ſleep ſound, and fear no evil; but never be perſuaded to truſt yourſelf to the Cafrs of Habeſh at Maſuah."

ON the 20th of September a female ſlave came and brought with her the proper credentials, an Indian handkerchief full of dry dates, and a pot or bottle of unvarniſhed potter's earth, which keeps the water very cool. I had ſome doubt upon this change of ſex; but the ſlave, who was an Abyſſinian girl, quickly undeceived me, delivered the dates, and took away the piſtols deſtined for Achmet, who had himſelf gone to his uncle, the Naybe, at Arkeeko.

ON the 21ſt, in the morning, the Naybe came from Arkeeko. The uſual way is by ſea; it is about two leagues ſtraight acroſs the bay, but ſomewhat more by land. The paſſage from the main is on the north ſide of the iſland, which is not above a quarter of a mile broad; there is a large ciſtern for rain-water on the land-ſide, where you embark acroſs. He was poorly attended by three or four ſervants, miſerably mounted, and about forty naked ſavages on foot, armed with ſhort lances and crooked knives.

THE drum beat before him all the way from Arkeeko to Maſuah. Upon entering the boat, the drum on the landſide ceaſed, and thoſe, in what is called the Caſtle of Maſuah, began. The caſtle is a ſmall clay hut, and in it one ſwivelgun, which is not mounted, but lies upon the ground, and is fired always with great trepidation and ſome danger. The drums are earthen jars, ſuch as they ſend butter in to Arabia; the mouths of which are covered with a ſkin, ſo that a ſtranger, on ſeeing two or three of theſe together, would run a great riſk of believing them to be jars of butter, or pickles, carefully covered with oiled parchment.

ALL the proceſſion was in the ſame ſtile. The Naybe was dreſſed in an old ſhabby Turkiſh habit, much too ſhort for him, and ſeemed to have been made about the time of Sultan Selim. He wore alſo upon his head a Turkiſh cowke, or high-cap, which ſcarcely admitted any part of his head. In this dreſs, which on him had a truly ridiculous appearance, he received the caftan, or inveſtiture, of the iſland of Maſuah; and, being thereby repreſentative of the grand ſignior, conſented that day to be called Omar Aga, in honour of the commiſſion.

Two ſtandards of white ſilk, ſtriped with red, were carried before him to the moſque, from whence he went to his own houſe to receive the compliments of his friends. In the afternoon of that day I went to pay my reſpects to him, and found him ſitting on a large wooden elbow-chair, at the head of two files of naked ſavages, who made an avenue from his chair to the door. He had nothing upon him but a coarſe cotton ſhirt, ſo dirty that, it ſeemed, all pains to clean it again would be thrown away, and ſo ſhort that it ſcarcely reached his knees. He was very tall and lean, his colour black, had a large mouth and noſe; in place of a beard, a very ſcanty tuft of grey hairs upon the point of his chin; large, dull, and heavy eyes; a kind of malicious, contemptuous, ſmile on his countenance; he was altogether of a moſt ſtupid and brutal appearance. His character perfectly correſponded with his figure, for he was a man of mean abilities, cruel to exceſs, avaricious, and a great drunkard.

I PRESENTED my firman.—The greateſt baſha in the Turkiſh empire would have riſen upon ſeeing it, kiſſed it, and carried it to his forehead; and I really expected that Omar Aga, for the day he bore that title, and received the caftan, would have ſhewn this piece of reſpect to his maſter. But he did not even receive it into his hand, and puſhed it back to me again, ſaying, "Do you read it all to me word for word."—"I told him it was Turkiſh; that I had never learned to read a word of that language."—"Nor I either," ſays he; "and I believe I never ſhall." I then gave him Metical Aga's letter, the Sherriffe's, Ali Bey's, and the Janizaries letters. He took them all together in both his hands, and laid them unopened beſide him, ſaying, "You ſhould have brought a moullah along with you. Do you think I ſhall read all theſe letters? Why, it would take me a month." And he glared upon me, with his mouth open, ſo like an idiot, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty I kept my gravity, only anſwering, "Juſt as you pleaſe; you know beſt."

He affected at firſt not to underſtand Arabic; ſpoke by an interpreter in the language of Maſuah, which is a dialect of Tigré; but ſeeing I underſtood him in this, he ſpoke Arabic, and ſpoke it well.

A silence followed this ſhort converſation, and I took the opportunity to give him his preſent, with which he did not ſeem diſpleaſed, but rather that it was below him to tell me ſo; for, without ſaying a word about it, he aſked me, where the Abuna of Habeſh was? and why he tarried ſo long? I ſaid, The wars in Upper Egypt had made the roads dangerous; and, it was eaſy to ſee, Omar longed much to ſettle accounts with him.

I took my leave of the Naybe, very little pleaſed with my reception, and the ſmall account he ſeemed to make of my letters, or of myſelf; but heartily ſatisfied with having ſent my diſpatches to Janni, now far out of his power.

The inhabitants of Maſuah were dying of the ſmall-pox, ſo that there was fear the living would not be ſufficient to bury the dead. The whole iſland was filled with ſhrieks and lamentations both night and day. They at laſt began to throw the bodies into the ſea, which deprived us of our great ſupport, fiſh, of which we had ate ſome kinds that were excellent. I had ſuppreſſed my character of phyſician, fearing I ſhould be detained by reaſon of the multitude of ſick.

On the 15th of October the Naybe came to Maſuah, and diſpatched the veſſel that brought me over; and, as if he had only waited till this evidence was out of the way, he, that very night, ſent me word that I was to prepare him a handſome preſent. He gave in a long liſt of particulars to a great amount, which he deſired might be divided into three parcels, and preſented three ſeveral days. One was to be given him as Naybe of Arkeeko; one as Omar Aga, repreſentative of the grand ſignior; and one for having paſſed our baggage *gratis* and unviſited, eſpecially the large quadrant. For my part, I heartily wiſhed he had ſeen the whole, as he would not have ſet great value on the braſs and iron.

As Achmet's aſſurance of protection had given me courage, I anſwered him, That, having a firman of the grand ſignior, and letters from Metical Aga, it was mere generoſity in me to give him any preſent at all, either as Naybe or Omar Aga, and I was not a merchant that bought and ſold, nor had merchandiſe on board, therefore had no cuſtoms to pay. Upon this he ſent for me to his houſe, where I found him in a violent fury, and many uſeleſs words paſſed on both ſides. At laſt he peremptorily told me, That unleſs I had 300 ounces of gold ready to pay him on Monday, upon his landing from Arkeeko, he would confine me in a dungeon, without light, air, or meat, till the bones came through my ſkin for want.

An uncle of his, then preſent, greatly aggravated this affair. He pretented that the Naybe might do what he pleaſed with his preſents; but that he could not in any ſhape give away the preſent due to the janizaries, which was 40 ounces of gold, or 400 dollars; and this was all they contented themſelves to take, on account of the letter I brought from the port of janizaries at Cairo; and in this they only taxed me the ſum paid by the Abuna for his paſſage through Maſuah. I anſwered firmly,—"Since you have broken your faith with the grand ſignior, the government of Cairo, the baſha at Jidda, and Metical Aga, you will no doubt do as you pleaſe with me; but you may expect to ſee the Engliſh man of war, the Lion, before Arkeeko, ſome morning by day-break."—"I ſhould be glad," ſaid the Naybe, "to ſee that man at Arkeeko or Maſuah that would carry as much writing from you to Jidda as would lie upon my thumb nail; I would ſtrip his ſhirt off firſt, and then his ſkin, and hang him before your door to teach you more wiſdom."—"But my wiſdom has taught me to prevent all this. My letter is already gone to Jidda; and if, in twenty days from this, another letter from me does not follow it, you will ſee what will arrive. In the mean time, I here announce it to you, that I have letters from Metical Aga and the Sherriffe of Mecca, to Michael Suhul governor of Tigrè, and the king of Abyſſinia. I, therefore, would wiſh that you would leave off theſe unmanly altercations, which ſerve no ſort of purpoſe, and let me continue my journey." The Naybe ſaid in a low voice to himſelf, "What, Michael too! then go your journey, and think of the ill that's before you." I turned my back without any anſwer or ſalutation, and was ſcarce arrived at home when a meſſage came from the Naybe, deſiring I would ſend him two bottles of aquavitæ.

I gave the ſervant two bottles of cinnamon-water, which he refuſed till I had firſt taſted them; but they were not agreeable to the Naybe, ſo they were returned.

All this time I very much wondered what was become of Achmet, who, with Mahomet Gibberti, remained at Arkeeko: at laſt I heard from the Naybe's ſervant that he was in bed, ill of a fever. Mahomet Gibberti had kept his promiſe to me; and, ſaying nothing of my ſkill in phyſic, or having medicines with me, I ſent, however, to the Naybe to deſire leave to go to Arkeeko. He anſwered me ſurlily, I might go if I could find a boat; and, indeed, he had taken his meaſures ſo well that not a boat would ſtir for money or perſuaſion.

On the 29th of October the Naybe came again from Arkeeko to Maſuah, and, I was told, in very ill-humour with me. I ſoon received a meſſage to attend him, and found him in a large waſte room like a barn, with about ſixty people with him. This was his divan, or grand council, with all his janizaries and officers of ſtate, all naked, aſſembled in parliament. There was a comet that had appeared a few days after our arrival at Maſuah, which had been many days viſible in Arabia Felix, being then in its perihelion; and, after paſſing its conjunction with the ſun, it now appeared at Maſuah early in the evening, receding to its aphelion. I had been obſerved watching it with great attention; and the large tubes of the teleſcopes had given offence to ignorant people.

The firſt queſtion the Naybe aſked me was, What that comet meant, and why it appeared? And before I could anſwer him, he again ſaid, "The firſt time it was viſible it brought the ſmall-pox, which has killed above 1000 people in Maſuah and Arkeeko. It is known you converſed with it every night at Loheia; it has now followed you again to finiſh the few that remain, and then you are to carry it into Abyſſinia. What have you to do with the comet?"

Without giving me leave to ſpeak, his brother Emir Achmet then ſaid, That he was informed I was an engineer going to Michael, governor of Tigré, to teach the Abyſſinians to make cannon and gunpowder; that the firſt attack was to be againſt Maſuah. Five or ſix others ſpoke much in the ſame ſtrain; and the Naybe concluded by ſaying, That he would ſend me in chains to Conſtantinople, unleſs I went to Hamazen, with his brother Emir Achmet, to the hot-wells there, and that this was the reſolution of all the janizaries; for I had concealed my being a phyſician.

I had not yet opened my mouth. I then aſked, If all theſe were janizaries; and where was their commanding officer? A well-looking, elderly man anſwered, "I am Sardar of the janizaries."—"If you are Sardar, then," ſaid I, "this firman orders you to protect me. The Naybe is a man of this country, no member of the Ottoman empire." Upon my firſt producing my firman to him, he threw it aſide like waſte-paper. The greateſt Vizir in the Turkiſh dominions would have received it ſtanding, bowed his head to the ground, then kiſſed it, and put it upon his forehead. A general murmur of approbation followed, and I continued,—"Now I muſt tell you my reſolution is, never to go to Hamazen, or elſewhere, with Emir Achmet. Both he and the Naybe have ſhewed themſelves my enemies; and, I believe, that to ſend me to Hamazen is to rob and murder me out of ſight."—"Dog of a Chriſtian!" ſays Emir Achmet, putting his hand to his knife, "if the Naybe was to murder you, could he not do it here now this minute?"—"No," ſays the man, who had called himſelf Sardar, "he could not; I would not ſuffer any ſuch thing. Achmet is the ſtranger's friend, and recommended me to-day to ſee no injury done him; he is ill, or would have been here himſelf."

"Achmet," ſaid I, "is my friend, and fears God; and were I not hindered by the Naybe from ſeeing him, his ſickneſs before this would have been removed. I will go to Achmet at Arkeeko, but not to Hamazen, nor ever again to the Naybe here in Maſuah. Whatever happens to me muſt befal me in my own houſe. Conſider what a figure a few naked men will make the day that my countrymen aſk the reaſon of this either here or in Arabia." I then turned my back, and went out without ceremony. "A brave man!" I heard a voice ſay behind me, "*Wallah Engleſe!* True Engliſh, by G—d!" I went away exceedingly diſturbed, as it was plain my affairs were coming to a criſis for good or for evil. I obſerved, or thought I obſerved, all the people ſhun me. I was, indeed, upon my guard, and did not wiſh them to come near me; but, turning down into my own gateway, a man paſſed cloſe by me, ſaying diſtinctly in my ear, though in a low voice, firſt in Tigré and then in Arabic, "*Fear nothing*, or, Be not afraid." This hint, ſhort as it was, gave me no ſmall courage.

I had ſcarcely dined, when a ſervant came with a letter from Achmet at Arkeeko, telling me how ill he had been, and how ſorry he was that I refuſed to come to ſee him, as

Mahomet Gibberti had told him I could help him. He deſired me alſo to keep the bearer with me in my houſe, and give him charge of the gate till he could come to Maſuah himſelf.

I soon ſaw the treachery of the Naybe. He had not, indeed, forbid me to go and ſee his nephew, but he had forbid any boat to carry me; and this I told the ſervant, appealing to the Sardar for what I ſaid in the divan of my willingneſs to go to Arkeeko to Achmet, though I poſitively refuſed to go to Hamazen. I begged the ſervant to ſtop for a moment, and go to the Sardar who was in the caſtle, as I had been very eſſentially obliged to him for his interpoſition at a very critical time, when there was an intention to take away my life. I ſent him a ſmall preſent by Achmet's ſervant, who delivered the meſſage faithfully, and had heard all that had paſſed in the divan. He brought me back a pipe from the Sardar in return for my preſent, with this meſſage, That he had heard of my countrymen, though he had never ſeen them; that he loved brave men, and could not ſee them injured; but Achmet being my friend, I had no need of him. That night he departed for Arkeeko, deſiring us to ſhut the door, and leaving us another man, with orders to admit nobody, and adviſing us to defend ourſelves if any one offered to force entrance, be they who they would, for that nobody had buſineſs abroad in the night.

I now began to reſume my confidence, ſeeing that Providence had ſtill kept us under his protection; and it was not long when we had an opportunity to exerciſe this confidence. About 12 o'clock at night a man came to the door, and deſired to be admitted; which requeſt was refuſed without any ceremony. Then came two or three more, in the name of Achmet, who were told by the ſervant that they would not be admitted. They then aſked to ſpeak with me, and grew very tumultuous, preſſing with their backs againſt the door. When I came to them, a young man among them ſaid he was ſon to Emir Achmet, and that his father and ſome friends were coming to drink a glaſs of aracky (ſo they call brandy) with me. I told him my reſolution was not to admit either Emir Achmet, or any other perſon at night, and that I never drank aracky.

They attempted again to force open the door, which was ſtrongly barricaded. But as there were cracks in it, I put the point of a ſword through one of them, deſiring them to be cautious of hurting themſelves upon the iron ſpikes. Still they attempted to force open the door, when the ſervant told them, that Achmet, when he left him the charge of that door, had ordered us to fire upon them who offered to force an entrance at night. A voice aſked him, Who the devil he was? The ſervant anſwered, in a very ſpirited manner, That he had greater reaſon to aſk who they were, as he took them for thieves, about whoſe names he did not trouble himſelf. "However," ſays he, "mine is Abdelcader, (the ſon of ſomebody elſe whom I do not remember). Now you know who I am, and that I do not fear you; and you, Yagoube, if you do not fire upon them, your blood be upon your own head. The Sardar from the caſtle will ſoon be up with the reſt." I ordered then a torch to be brought, that they might have a view of us through the cracks of the door; but Abdelcader's threat being fully ſufficient, they retired, and we heard no more of them.

It was the 4th of November when the ſervant of Achmet returned in a boat from Arkeeko, and with him four janizaries. He was not yet well, and was very deſirous to ſee me. He ſuſpected either that he was poiſoned or bewitched, and had tried many charms without good effect. We arrived at Arkeeko about eleven, paſſed the door of the Naybe without challenge, and found Achmet in his own houſe, ill of an intermitting fever, under the very worſt of regimens.

He was much apprehenſive that he ſhould die, or loſe the uſe of his limbs as Emir Achmet had done: the ſame woman, a Shiho, and a witch, was, he ſaid, the occaſion of both. "If Achmet, your uncle, had loſt the uſe of his tongue, ſaid I, it would have ſaved him a great deal of improper diſcourſe in the divan." His head ached violently, and he could only ſay, "Aye! aye! the old miſcreant knew I was ill, or that would not have happened." I gave Achmet proper remedies to eaſe his pains and his ſtomach, and the next morning began with bark.

This medicine operates quickly here; nay, even the bark that remains, after the ſtronger ſpiritous tincture is drawn from it, ſeems to anſwer the purpoſe very little worſe than did the firſt. I ſtaid here till the 6th in the morning, at which time he was free from the fever. I left him, however, ſome doſes to prevent its return; and he told me, on the 7th, he would come to Maſuah with boats and men to bring us with our baggage to Arkeeko, and free us from the bondage of Maſuah.

Upon the 6th, in the morning, while at breakfaſt, I was told that three ſervants had arrived from Tigrè; one from Janni, a young man and ſlave, who ſpoke and wrote Greek perfectly; the other two ſervants were Ras Michael's, or rather the king's, both wearing the red ſhort cloak lined and turned up with mazarine-blue, which is the badge of the king's ſervant, and is called *ſhalaka*. Ras Michael's letters to the Naybe were very ſhort. He ſaid the king Hatzè Hannes's health was bad, and wondered at hearing that the phyſician, ſent to him by Metical Aga from Arabia, was not forwarded to him inſtantly at Gondar, as he had heard of his being arrived at Maſuah ſome time before. He ordered the Naybe, moreover, to furniſh me with neceſſaries, and diſpatch me without loſs of time; although all the letters were the contrivances of Janni, his particular letter to the Naybe was in a milder ſtile. He expreſſed the great neceſſity the king had for a phyſician, and how impatiently he had waited his arrival. He did not ſay that he had heard any ſuch perſon was yet arrived at Maſuah, only wiſhed he might be forwarded without delay as ſoon as he came.

To us Janni ſent a meſſage by a ſervant, bidding us a hearty welcome, aknowledging the receipt of the patriarch's letter, and adviſing us, by all means, to come ſpeedily to him, for the times were very unſettled, and might grow worſe.

In the afternoon I embarked for Maſuah. At the ſhore I received a meſſage from the Naybe to come and ſpeak to him; but I returned for anſwer, It was impoſſible, as I was obliged to go to Maſuah to get medicines for his nephew, Achmet.

CHAP. II.

Directions to Travellers for preſerving Health—Diſeaſes of the Country—Muſic—Trade, &c. of Maſuah—Conferences with the Naybe.

WE arrived in the iſland at eight o'clock, to the great joy of our ſervants, who were afraid of ſome ſtratagem of the Naybe. We got every thing in order, without interruption, and completed our obſervations upon this inhoſpitable iſland, infamous for the quantity of Chriſtian blood ſhed there upon treacherous pretences.

MASUAH, by a great variety of obſervations of the ſun and ſtars, we found to be in lat. 15° 35′ 5″, and, by an obſervation of the ſecond ſatellite of Jupiter, on the 22d of September 1769, we found its longitude to be 39° 36′ 30″ eaſt of the meridian of Greenwich: the variation of the needle was obſerved at mid-day, the 23d of September, to be 12° 48′. W. From this it follows, that Loheia, being nearly oppoſite, (for it is in lat. 15° 40′ 52″) the breadth of the Red Sea between Maſuah and Loheia is 4° 10′ 22″. Suppoſing, then, a degree to be equal to 66 ſtatute miles, this, in round numbers, will bring the breadth to be 276 miles, equal to 92 leagues, or thereabouts.

Again, as the generality of maps have placed the coaſt of Arabia where Loheia ſtands, in the 44°, and it is the part of the peninſula that runs fartheſt to the weſtward, all the weſt coaſt of Arabia Felix will fall to be brought farther eaſt about 3° 46′ 0″.

Before packing up our barometer at Loheia, I filled a tube with clean mercury, perfectly purged of outward air; and, on the 30th of Auguſt, upon three ſeveral trials, the mean of the reſults of each trial was, at ſix in the morning, 26° 8′ 8″; two o'clock in the afternoon, 26° 4′ 1″; and, half paſt ſix in the evening, 26° 6′ 2″, fair, clear weather, with very little wind at weſt.

At Maſuah, the 4th of October, I repeated the ſame experiment with the ſame mercury and tube; the means were as follow: At ſix in the morning 25° 8′ 2″; two o'clock in the afternoon, 25° 3′ 2″; and, at half paſt ſix in the evening, 25° 3′ 7″, clear, with a moderate wind at weſt, ſo that the barometer fell one inch and one line at Maſuah lower than it was at Loheia, though it often roſe upon violent ſtorms of wind and rain; and, even where there was no rain, it again fell inſtantly upon the ſtorm ceaſing, and never arrived to the height it ſtood laſt at on the coaſt of Arabia. The greateſt height I ever obſerved Fahrenheit's thermometer in the ſhade, at Maſuah, was on the 22d of October, at two in the afternoon, 93°, wind N. E. and by N. cloudy; the loweſt was on the 23d, at four in the morning, 82°, wind weſt. It was, to ſenſe, much hotter than in any part of Arabia Felix; but we found no ſuch tickling or irritation on our legs as we had done at Loheia, probably becauſe the ſoil was here leſs impregnated with ſalt.

We obſerved here, for the firſt time, three remarkable circumſtances ſhewing the increaſe of heat. I had carried with me ſeveral ſteel plates for making ſcrews of different ſizes. The heat had ſo ſwelled the pin, or *male* ſcrew, that it was cut nearly one-third through by the edge of the female. The ſealing-wax, of which we had procured a freſh parcel from the India ſhips, was fully more fluid, while lying in our boxes, than tar. The third was the colour of the ſpirit in the thermometer, which was quite diſcharged, and ſticking in maſſes at unequal heights, while the liquor was clear like ſpring-water.

Masuah is very unwholeſome, as, indeed, is the whole coaſt of the Red Sea from Suez to Babelmandeb, but more eſpecially between the tropics. Violent fevers, called there *nedad*, make the principal figure in this fatal liſt, and generally terminate the third day in death. If the patient ſurvives till the fifth day, he very often recovers by drinking water only, and throwing a quantity of cold water upon him, even in his bed, where he is permitted to lie without attempting to make him dry, or change his bed, till another deluge adds to the firſt.

There is no remedy ſo ſovereign here as the bark; but it muſt be given in very different times and manners from thoſe purſued in Europe. Were a phyſician to take time to prepare his patient for the bark, by firſt giving him purgatives, he would be dead of the fever before his preparation was completed. Immediately when a nauſea or averſion to eat, frequent fits of yawning, ſtraitneſs about the eyes, and an unuſual, but not painful ſenſation along the ſpine, comes on, no time is then to be loſt; ſmall doſes of the bark muſt be frequently repeated, and perfect abſtinence obſerved, unleſs from copious draughts of cold water.

I NEVER dared to venture, or ſeldom, upon the deluge of water, but am convinced it is frequently of great uſe. The ſecond or third doſe of the bark, if any quantity is ſwallowed, never fails to purge; and, if this evacuation is copious, the patient rarely dies, but, on the contrary, his recovery is generally rapid. Moderate purging, then, is for the moſt part to be adopted; and rice is a much better food than fruit.

I KNOW that all this is heterodox in Europe, and contrary to the practice, becauſe it is contrary to ſyſtem. For my own part, I am content to write faithfully what I carefully obſerved, leaving every body afterwards to follow their own way at their peril.

BARK, I have been told by Spaniards who have been in South America, purges always when taken in their fevers. A different climate, different regimen, and different habit of body or exerciſe, may ſurely ſo far alter the operation of a drug as to make it have a different effect in Africa from what it has in Europe. Be that as it may, ſtill I ſay bark is a purgative when it is ſucceſsful in this fever; but bleeding, at no ſtage of this diſtemper, is of any ſervice; and, indeed, if attempted the ſecond day, the lancet is ſeldom followed by blood. Ipecacuanha both fatigues the patient and heightens the fever, and ſo conducts the patient more ſpeedily to his end. Black ſpots are frequently found on the breaſt and belly of the dead perſon. The belly ſwells, and the ſtench becomes inſufferable in three hours after death, if the perſon dies in the day, or if the weather is warm.

The next common diſeaſe in the low country of Arabia, the intermediate iſland of Maſuah, and all Abyſſinia, (for the diſeaſes are exactly ſimilar in all this tract) is the Tertian fever, which is in nothing different from our Tertian, and is ſucceſsfully treated here in the ſame manner as in Europe. As no ſpecies of this diſeaſe (at leaſt that I have ſeen) menaces the patient with death, eſpecially in the beginning of the diſorder, ſome time may be allowed for preparation to thoſe who doubt the effect of the bark in the country. But ſtill I apprehend the ſafeſt way is to give ſmall doſes from the beginning, on the firſt intermiſſion, or even remiſſion, though this ſhould be ſomewhat obſcure and uncertain. To ſpeak plainly; when the ſtomach nauſeates, the head akes, yawning becomes frequent, and not an exceſſive pain in the nape of the neck, when a ſhivering which goes quickly off, a coldneſs down the ſpine, a more than ordinary cowardlineſs and inactivity prevails, (the heat of the climate gives one always enough of theſe laſt ſenſations); I ſay, when any number of theſe ſymptoms unite, have recourſe to the powder of bark infuſed in water; ſhut your mouth againſt every ſort of food; and, at the criſis, your diſeaſe will immediately decide its name among the claſs of fevers.

All fevers end in intermittents; and if theſe intermittents continue long, and the firſt evacuations by the bark have not been copious and conſtant, theſe fevers generally end in dyſenteries, which are always tedious and very frequently prove mortal. Bark in ſmall quantities, ipecacuanha, too, in very ſmall quantities ſo as not to vomit, water, and fruit not over ripe, have been found the moſt ſucceſsful remedies.

As for the other ſpecies of dyſentery, which begins with a conſtant diarrhœa, when the guts at laſt are excoriated, and the mucus voided by the ſtools, this diſeaſe is rarely cured if it begins with the rainy ſeaſon. But if, on the contrary, it happen either in the ſunny ſix months, or the end of the rainy ones immediately next to them, ſmall doſes of ipecacuanha either carry it off, or it changes into an intermitting fever, which yields afterwards to the bark. And it always has ſeemed to me that there is a great affinity between the fevers and dyſenteries in theſe countries, the one ending in the other almoſt perpetually.

The next diſeaſe, which we may ſay is endemial in the countries before mentioned, is called *hanzeer*, the *hogs* or the *ſwine*, and is a ſwelling of the glands of the throat, and under the arms. This the ignorant inhabitants endeavour to bring to a ſuppuration, but in vain; they then open them in ſeveral places; a ſore and running follows, and a diſeaſe very much reſembling what is called in Europe the Evil.

The next (though not a dangerous complaint) has a very terrible appearance. Small tubercules or ſwellings appear all over the body, but thickeſt in the thighs, arms, and legs. Theſe ſwellings go and come for weeks together without pain; though the legs often ſwell to a monſtrous ſize as in the dropſy. Sometimes the patients have ulcers in their noſes.

noſes and mouths, not unlike thoſe which are one of the malignant conſequences of the venereal diſeaſe. The ſmall ſwellings or eruptions, when ſqueezed, very often yield blood; in other reſpects the patient is generally in good health, ſaving the pain the ulcers give him, and the ſtill greater uneaſineſs of mind which he ſuffers from the ſpoiling of the ſmoothneſs of his ſkin; for all the nations in Africa within the tropics are wonderfully affected at the ſmalleſt eruption or roughneſs of the ſkin. A black of Sennaar will hide himſelf in the houſe where dark, and is not to be ſeen by his friends, if he ſhould have two or three pimples on any part of his body. Nor is there any remedy, however violent, that they will not fly to for immediate relief. Scars and wounds are no blemiſhes; and I have ſeen them, for three or four pimples on their bracelet arm, ſuffer the application of a red-hot iron with great reſolution and conſtancy.

These two laſt diſeaſes yielded, the firſt ſlowly, and ſometimes imperfectly, to mercurials; and ſublimate has by no means in theſe climates the quick and deciſive effects it has in Europe. The ſecond is completely and ſpeedily cured by antimonials.

The next complaint I ſhall mention, as common in theſe countries, is called Farenteit, a corruption of an Arabic word, which ſignifies the worm of Pharaoh; all bad things being by the Arabs attributed to theſe poor kings, who ſeem to be looked upon by poſterity as the evil genii of the country which they once governed.

This extraordinary animal only afflicts thoſe who are in conſtant habit of drinking ſtagnant water, whether that water is drawn out from wells, as in the kingdom of Sennaar, or found by digging in the ſand where it is making its way to its proper level the ſea, after falling down the ſide of the mountains after the tropical rains. This plague appears indiſcriminately in every part of the body, but ofteneſt in the legs and arms. I never ſaw it in the face or head; but, far from affecting the fleſhy parts of the body, it generally comes out where the bone has leaſt fleſh upon it.

Upon looking at this worm, on its firſt appearance, a ſmall black head is extremely viſible, with a hooked beak of a whitiſh colour. Its body is ſeemingly of a white ſilky texture, very like a ſmall tendon bared and perfectly cleaned. After its appearance the natives of theſe countries, who are uſed to it, ſeize it gently by the head, and wrap it round a thin piece of ſilk or ſmall bird's feather. Every day, or ſeveral times a-day, they try to wind it up upon the quill as far as it comes readily; and, upon the ſmalleſt reſiſtance, they give over for fear of breaking it. I have ſeen five feet, or ſomething more of this extraordinary animal, winded out with invincible patience in the courſe of three weeks. No inflammation then remained, and ſcarcely any redneſs round the edges of the aperture, only a ſmall quantity of lymph appeared in the hole or puncture, which ſcarcely iſſued out upon preſſing. In three days it was commonly well, and left no ſcar or dimple implying loſs of ſubſtance.

I myself experienced this complaint. I was reading upon a ſofa at Cairo, a few days after my return from Upper Egypt, when I felt in the fore part of my leg, upon the bone, about ſeven inches below the center of my knee-pan, an itching reſembling what follows the bite of a muſcheto. Upon ſcratching, a ſmall tumour appeared very like a muſcheto bite. The itching returned in about an hour afterwards; and, being more intent upon my reading than my leg, I ſcratched it till the blood came. I ſoon after obſerved ſomething like a black ſpot, which had already riſen conſiderably above the ſurface of the ſkin. All medicine proved uſeleſs; and the diſeaſe not being known at Cairo, there was nothing for it but to have recourſe to the only received manner of treating it in this country. About three inches of the worm was winded out upon a piece of raw ſilk in the firſt week, without pain or fever: but it was broken afterwards through the careleſſneſs and raſhneſs of the ſurgeon when changing a poultice on board the ſhip in which I returned to France: a violent inflammation followed; the leg ſwelled ſo as to ſcarce leave appearance of knee or ancle; the ſkin, red and diſtended, ſeemed glazed like a mirror. The wound was now healed, and diſcharged nothing; and there was every appearance of mortification coming on. The great care and attention procured me in the lazaretto at Marſeilles, by a nation always foremoſt in the acts of humanity to ſtrangers, and the attention and ſkill of the ſurgeon, recovered me from this troubleſome complaint.

Fifty-two days had elapſed ſince it firſt begun; thirty-five of which were ſpent in the greateſt agony. It ſuppurated at laſt; and, by enlarging the orifice, a good quantity of matter was diſcharged. I had made conſtant uſe of bark, both in fomentations and inwardly; but I did not recover the ſtrength of my leg entirely till near a year after, by uſing the baths of Poretta, the property of my friend Count Ranuzzi, in the mountains above Bologna, which I recommend, for their efficacy, to all thoſe who have wounds, as I do to him to have better accommodation, greater abundance of, and leſs impoſition in, the neceſſaries of life than when I was there, It is but a few hours journey over the mountains to Piſtoia.

The laſt I ſhall mention of theſe endemial diſeaſes, and the moſt terrible of all others that can fall to the lot of man, is the Elephantiaſis, which ſome have choſen to call the Leproſy, or Lepra Arabum; though in its appearance, and in all its circumſtances and ſtages, it no more reſembles the leproſy of Paleſtine, (which is, I apprehend, the only leproſy that we know) than it does the gout or the dropſy. I never ſaw the beginning of this diſeaſe. During the courſe of it, the face is often healthy to appearance; the eyes vivid and ſparkling: thoſe affected have ſometimes a kind of dryneſs upon the ſkin of their backs, which, upon ſcratching, I have ſeen leave a mealineſs, or whiteneſs; the only circumſtance, to the beſt of my recollection, in which it reſembled the leproſy, but it has no ſcalineſs. The hair, too, is of its natural colour; not white, yellowiſh, or thin, as in the leproſy, but ſo far from it that, though the Abyſſinians have very rarely hair upon their chin, I have ſeen people, apparently in the laſt ſtage of the elephantiaſis, with a very good beard of its natural colour.

The appetite is generally good during this diſeaſe, nor does any change of regimen affect the complaint. The pulſe is only ſubject to the ſame variations as in thoſe who have no declared nor predominant illneſs; they have a conſtant thirſt, as the lymph, which continually oozes from their wounds, probably demands to be replaced. It is averred by the Abyſſinians that it is not infectious. I have ſeen the wives of thoſe who were in a very inveterate ſtage of this illneſs, who had born them ſeveral children, who were yet perfectly free and ſound from any contagion. Nay, I do not remember to have ſeen children viſibly infected with this diſeaſe at all; though, I muſt own, none of them had the appearance of health. It is ſaid this diſeaſe, though ſurely born with the infant, does not become viſible till the approach to manhood, and ſometimes it is ſaid to paſs by a whole generation.

The chief ſeat of this diſeaſe is from the bending of the knee downwards to the ancle; the leg is ſwelled to a great degree, becoming one ſize from bottom to top, and gathered into circular wrinkles, like ſmall hoops or plaits; between every one of which there is an opening that ſeparates it all round from the one above, and which is all raw fleſh, or perfectly excoriated. From between theſe circular diviſions a great quantity of lymph conſtantly oozes. The ſwelling of the leg reaches over the foot, ſo as to leave about an inch or little more of it ſeen. It ſhould ſeem that the black colour of the ſkin, the thickneſs of the leg, and its ſhapeleſs form, and the rough tubercules, or excreſcences, very like thoſe ſeen upon the elephant, give the name to this diſeaſe, and form a ſtriking reſemblance between the diſtempered legs of this unfortunate individual of the human ſpecies, and thoſe of the noble quadruped the elephant, when in full vigour.

An infirmity, to which the Abyſſinians are ſubject, of much worſe conſequence to the community than the elephantiaſis, I mean lying, makes it impoſſible to form, from their relations, any accurate account of ſymptoms that might lead the learned to diſcover the cauſes of this extraordinary diſtemper, and thence ſuggeſt ſome rational method to cure, or diminiſh it.

It was not from the ignorance of language, nor from want of opportunity, and leſs from want of pains, that I am not able to give a more diſtinct account of this dreadful diſorder. I kept one of thoſe infected in a houſe adjoining to mine, in my way to the palace, for near two years; and, during that time, I tried every ſort of regimen that I could deviſe. My friend, Dr Ruſſel, phyſician at Aleppo, (now in the Eaſt Indies), to whoſe care and ſkill I was indebted for my life in a dangerous fever which I had in Syria, and whoſe friendſhip I muſt always conſider as one of the greateſt acquiſitions I ever made in travelling, deſired me, among other medical inquiries, to try the effect of the cicuta upon this diſeaſe; and a conſiderable quantity, made according to the direction of Dr Storke, phyſician in Vienna, was ſent me from Paris, with inſtructions how to uſe it.

Having firſt explained the whole matter, both to the king, Ras Michael, and Azage Tecla Haimanout, chief juſtice of the king's bench in Abyſſinia, and told them of the conſequences of giving too great a doſe, I obtained their joint permiſſions to go on without fear, and do what I thought requiſite. It is my opinion, ſays the Azage, that no harm that may accidentally befal one miſerable individual, now already cut off from ſociety, ſhould hinder the trial (the only one we ever ſhall have an opportunity of making) of a medicine which may ſave multitudes hereafter from a diſeaſe ſo much worſe than death.

It was ſoon ſeen, by the conſtant adminiſtration of many ordinary doſes, that nothing was to be expected from violent or dangerous ones; as not the ſmalleſt degree of amendment ever appeared, either outwardly or inwardly, to the ſenſation of the patient. Mercury had no better effect. Tar-water alſo was tried; and if there was any thing that produced any ſeeming advantage, it was whey made of cow's milk, of which he was exceſſively fond, and which the king ordered him to be furniſhed with at my deſire, in any quantity he pleaſed, during the experiment.

The troubles of the times prevented further attention. Dr Storke's cicuta, in ſeveral inſtances, made a perfect cure of the hanzeers improperly opened, though, in ſeveral other caſes, without any apparent cauſe, it totally miſcarried. I ſcarce ever obſerved mercury ſucceed in any complaint.

It is not for me to attempt to explain what are the cauſes of theſe diſtempers. Thoſe whoſe ſtudies lead them to ſuch inveſtigations will do well to attach themſelves, for firſt principles, to the difference of climate, and the abuſes that obtain under them; after this, to particular circumſtances in the neceſſaries of life, to which nature has ſubjected the people of theſe countries. Under the firſt, we may rank a ſeaſon of ſix months rains, ſucceeded, without interval, by a cloudleſs ſky and vertical ſun; and cold nights which as immediately follow theſe ſcorching days. The earth, notwithſtanding the heat of theſe days, is yet perpetually cold, ſo as to feel diſagreeably to the ſoles of the feet; partly owing to the ſix months rains, when no ſun appears, and partly to the perpetual equality of nights and days; the thinneſs of the cloathing in the better ſort, (a muſlin ſhirt) while the others are naked, and ſleep in this manner expoſed, without covering in the cold nights, after the violent perſpiration during the ſultry day. Theſe may be reckoned imprudences, while the conſtant uſe of ſtagnant putrid water for four months of the year, and the quantity of ſalt with which the ſoil of thoſe countries is impregnated, may be circumſtances leſs conducive to health; to which, however, they have been for ever ſubject by nature.

It will be very reaſonably expected, that, after this unfavourable account of the climate, and the uncertainty of remedies for theſe frequent and terrible diſeaſes, I ſhould ſay ſomething of the regimen proper to be obſerved there, in order to prevent what it ſeems ſo doubtful whether we can ever cure.

My firſt general advice to a traveller is this, to remember well what was the ſtate of his conſtitution before he viſited theſe countries, and what his complaints were, if he had any; for fear very frequently ſeizes us upon the firſt ſight of the many and ſudden deaths we ſee upon our firſt arrival, and our ſpirits are ſo lowered by perpetual perſpiration, and our nerves ſo relaxed, that we are apt to miſtake the ordinary ſymptoms of a diſeaſe, familiar to us in our own country, for the approach of one of theſe terrible diſtempers that are to hurry us in a few hours into eternity. This has a bad effect in the very ſlighteſt diſorders;

ſo that it hath become proverbial—If you think you ſhall die, you ſhall die.

If a traveller finds, that he is as well after having been ſome time in this country as he was before entering it, his beſt way is to make no innovation in his regimen, further than in abating ſomething in the quantity. But if he is of a tender conſtitution, he cannot act more wiſely than to follow implicitly the regimen of ſober, healthy people of the country, without arguing upon European notions, or ſubſtituting what we conſider as ſuccedaneums to what we ſee uſed on the ſpot. All ſpirits are to be avoided; even bark is better in water than in wine. The ſtomach, being relaxed by profuſe perſpiration, needs ſomething to ſtrengthen, but not inflame, and enable it to perform digeſtion. For this reaſon (inſtinct we ſhould call it, if ſpeaking of beaſts) the natives of all eaſtern countries ſeaſon every ſpecies of food, even the ſimpleſt, and mildeſt, rice, ſo much with ſpices, eſpecially pepper, as abſolutely to bliſter a European palate.

These powerful antiſeptics Providence has planted in theſe countries for this uſe; and the natives have, from the earlieſt times, had recourſe to them in proportion to the quantity that they can procure. And hence, in theſe dangerous climates, the natives are as healthy as we are in our northern ones. Travellers in Arabia are diſguſted at this ſeemingly inflammatory food; and nothing is more common than to hear them ſay that they are afraid theſe quantities of ſpices will give them a fever. But did they ever feel themſelves heated by ever ſo great a quantity of black pepper? Spirits they think, ſubſtituted to this, anſwer the ſame purpoſe. But does not the heat of your ſkin, the violent pain in your head, while the ſpirits are filtering through the veſſels of your brains, ſhew the difference? and when did any ever feel a like ſenſation from black pepper, or any pepper ate to exceſs in every meal?

I LAY down, then, as a poſitive rule of health, that the warmeſt diſhes the natives delight in, are the moſt wholeſome ſtrangers can uſe in the putrid climates of the Lower Arabia, Abyſſinia, Sennaar, and Egypt itſelf; and that ſpirits, and all fermented liquors, ſhould be regarded as poiſons, and, for fear of temptation, not ſo much as be carried along with you, unleſs as a menſtruum for outward applications.

SPRING, or running water, if you can find it, is to be your only drink. You cannot be too nice in procuring this article. But as, on both coaſts of the Red Sea you ſcarcely find any but ſtagnant water, the way I practiſed was always this, when I was at any place that allowed me time and opportunity—I took a quantity of fine ſand, waſhed it from the ſalt quality with which it was impregnated, and ſpread it upon a ſheet to dry; I then filled an oil-jar with water, and poured into it as much from a boiling kettle as would ſerve to kill all the animalcula and eggs that were in it. I then ſifted my dried ſand, as ſlowly as poſſible, upon the ſurface of the water in the jar, till the ſand ſtood half a foot in the bottom of it; after letting it ſettle a night, we drew it off by a hole in the jar with a ſpigot in it, about an inch above the ſand; then threw the remaining ſand out upon the cloth, and dried and waſhed it again.

THIS proceſs is ſooner performed than deſcribed. The water is as limpid as the pureſt ſpring, and little inferior to the fineſt Spa. Drink largely of this without fear, according as your appetite requires. By violent perſpiration the aqueous part of your blood is thrown off; and it is not ſpiritous liquor can reſtore this, whatever momentary ſtrength it may give you from another cauſe. When hot, and almoſt fainting with weakneſs from continual perſpiration, I have gone into a warm bath, and been immediately reſtored to ſtrength, as upon firſt riſing in the morning. Some perhaps will object, that this heat ſhould have weakened and overpowered you; but the fact is otherwiſe; and the reaſon is, the quantity of water, taken up by your abſorbing veſſels, reſtored to your blood that finer fluid which was thrown off, and then the uneaſineſs occaſioned by that want ceaſed, for it was the want of that we called uneaſineſs.

In Nubia never ſcruple to throw yourſelf into the coldeſt river or ſpring you can find, in whatever degree of heat you are. The reaſon of the difference in Europe is, that when by violence you have raiſed yourſelf to an extraordinary degree of heat, the cold water in which you plunge yourſelf checks your perſpiration, and ſhuts your pores ſuddenly. The medium is itſelf too cold, and you do not uſe force ſufficient to bring back the perſpiration, which nought but action occaſioned; whereas, in theſe warm countries, your perſpiration is natural and conſtant, though no action be uſed, only from the temperature of the medium; therefore, though your pores are ſhut, the moment you plunge yourſelf in the cold water, the ſimple condition of the outward air again covers you with pearls of ſweat the moment you emerge; and you begin the expence of the aqueous part of your blood afreſh from the new ſtock that you have laid in by your immerſion.

For this reaſon, if you are well, deluge yourſelf from head to foot, even in the houſe, where water is plenty, by directing a ſervant to throw buckets upon you at leaſt once a-day when you are hotteſt; not from any imagination that the water braces you, as it is called, for your bracing will laſt you only a very few minutes; but theſe copious inundations will carry watery particles into your blood, though not equal to bathing in running ſtreams, where the total immerſion, the motion of the water, and the action of the limbs, all conſpire to the benefit you are in queſt of. As to cold water bracing in theſe climates, I am perſuaded it is an idea not founded in truth. By obſervation it has appeared often to me, that, when heated by violent exerciſe, I have been much more relieved, and my ſtrength more completely reſtored by the uſe of a tepid bath, than by an equal time paſſed in a cold one.

Do not fatigue yourſelf if poſſible. Exerciſe is not either ſo neceſſary or ſalutary here as in Europe. Uſe fruits ſparingly, eſpecially if too ripe. The muſa, or banana, in Arabia Felix, are always rotten-ripe when they are brought to you. Avoid all ſort of fruit expoſed for ſale in the markets, as it has probably been gathered in the ſun, and carried miles in it, and all its juices are in a ſtate of fermentation. Lay it firſt upon a table covered with a coarſe cloth, and throw frequently a quantity of water upon it; and, if you have an opportunity, gather it in the dew of the morning before dawn of day, for that is far better.

Rice and pillaw are the beſt food; fowls are very bad, eggs are worſe; greens are not wholeſome. In Arabia the mutton is good, and, when roaſted, may be eaten warm with ſafety; perhaps better if cold. All ſoups or broths are to be avoided; all game is bad.

I HAVE known many very ſcrupulous about eating ſuppers, but, I am perſuaded, without reaſon. The great perſpiration which relaxes the ſtomach ſo much through the day has now ceaſed, and the breathing of cooler air has given to its operations a much ſtronger tone. I always made it my moſt liberal meal, if I ate meat at all. While at Jidda, my ſupper was a piece of cold, roaſted mutton, and a large glaſs of water, with my good friend Captain Thornhill, during the dog-days.

AFTER this, the exceſſive heat of the day being paſt, covering our heads from the night-air, always blowing at that time from the eaſt and charged with watery particles from the Indian Ocean, we had a luxurious walk of two or three hours, as free from the heat as from the noiſe and impertinence of the day, upon a terraſſed roof, under a cloudleſs ſky, where the ſmalleſt ſtar is viſible. Theſe evening walks have been looked upon as one of the principal pleaſures of the eaſt, even though not accompanied with the luxuries of aſtronomy and meditation. They have been adhered to from early times to the preſent, and we may therefore be aſſured they were always wholeſome; they have often been miſapplied and miſpent in love.

IT is a cuſtom that, from the firſt ages, has prevailed in the eaſt, to ſhriek and lament upon the death of a friend or relation, and cut their faces upon the temple with their nails, about the breadth of a ſixpence, one of which is left long for that purpoſe. It was always practiſed by the Jews, and thence adopted by the Abyſſinians, though expreſsly forbidden both by the law and by the prophets *. At Maſuah, it ſeems to be particular to dance upon that occaſion. The women, friends, and viſitors place themſelves in a ring; then dance ſlowly, figuring in and out as in a country-dance. This dance is all to the voice, no inſtrument being uſed upon the occaſion; only the drum (the butter-jar before mentioned) is beat adroitly enough, and ſeems at once neceſſary to keep the dance and ſong in order. In Abyſſinia, too, this is purſued in a manner more ridiculous. Upon the death of an ozoro, or any nobleman, the twelve judges, (who are generally between 60 and 70 years of age) ſing the ſong, and dance the figure-dance, in a manner ſo truly ridiculous, that grief muſt have taken faſt hold of every ſpectator who does not laugh upon the occaſion. There needs no other proof the deceaſed was a friend.

Mahomet Gibberti married at Arkeeko. For fifteen days afterward, the huſband there is inviſible to everybody but the female friends of his wife, who in that ſultry country do every thing they can, by hot and ſpiced drinks, to throw the man, ſtewed in a cloſe room, into a fever. I do believe that Mahomet Gibberti, in the courſe of theſe fifteen days, was at leaſt two ſtone lighter. It puts me much in mind of ſome of our countrymen ſweating themſelves for a horſe-race with a load of flannel on. I conceive that Mahomet Gibberti, had it not been for the ſpice, would have made a bad figure in the match he was engaged in. One of theſe nights of his being ſequeſtered, when, had I not providentially

---

* Levit. chap. xix. ver. 28. Jerem. chap. xvi. ver. 6.

tially engaged Achmet, his uncle the Naybe would have cut our throats. I heard two girls, profeſſors hired for ſuch occaſions, ſing alternately verſe for verſe in reply to each other, in the moſt agreeable and melodious manner I ever heard in my life. This gave me great hopes that, in Abyſſinia, I ſhould find muſic in a ſtate of perfection little expected in Europe. Upon inquiry into particulars I was miſerably diſappointed, by being told theſe muſicians were all ſtrangers from Azab, the myrrh country, where all the people were natural muſicians, and ſung in a better ſtile than that I had heard; but that nothing of this kind was known in Abyſſinia, a mountainous, barbarous country, without inſtrument, and without ſong; and that it was the ſame here in Atbara; a miſerable truth, which I afterwards completely verified. Theſe ſingers were Cuſhites, not Shepherds.

I, HOWEVER, made myſelf maſter of two or three of theſe alternate ſongs upon the guitar, the wretched inſtrument of that country; and was ſurpriſed to find the words in a language equally ſtrange to Maſuah and Abyſſinia. I had frequent interviews with theſe muſicians in the evening; they were perfectly black and woolly-headed. Being ſlaves, they ſpoke both Arabic and Tigrè, but could ſing in neither; and, from every poſſible inquiry, I found every thing, allied to counterpoint, was unknown among them. I have ſometimes endeavoured to recover fragments of theſe ſongs, which I once perfectly knew from memory only, but unfortunately I committed none of them to writing. Sorrow, and various misfortunes, that every day marked my ſtay in the barbarous country to which I was then going, and the neceſſary part I, much againſt my will, was for ſelf-preſervation forced to take in the ruder occupations of thoſe times, have, to my very great regret, obliterated long ago the whole from my memory.

It is a general cuſtom in Maſuah for people to burn myrrh and incenſe in their houſes before they open the doors in the morning; and when they go out at night, or early in the day, they have always a ſmall piece of rag highly fumigated with theſe two perfumes, which they ſtuff into each noſtril to keep them from the unwholeſome air.

The houſes in Maſuah are, in general, built of poles and bent graſs, as in the towns of Arabia; but, beſides theſe, there are about twenty of ſtone, ſix or eight of which are two ſtoreys each; though the ſecond ſeldom conſiſts of more than one room, and that one generally not a large one. The ſtones are drawn out of the ſea as at Dahalac; and in theſe we ſee the beds of that curious muſſel, or ſhell-fiſh, found to be contained in the ſolid rock at Mahon, called *Dattoli da mare*, or ſea-dates, the fiſh of which I never ſaw in the Red Sea; though there is no doubt but they are to be found in the rocky iſlands about Maſuah, if they break the rocks for them.

Although Maſuah is ſituated in the very entrance of Abyſſinia, a very plentiful country, yet all the neceſſaries of life are ſcarce and dear. Their quality, too, is very indifferent. This is owing to the difficulty, expence, and danger of carrying the ſeveral articles through the deſert flat country, called Samhar, which lies between Arkeeko and the mountains of Abyſſinia; as well as to the extortions exerciſed by the Naybe, who takes, under the name of cuſtoms, whatever part he pleaſes of the goods and proviſions brought to that iſland; by which means the profit of the ſeller is ſo ſmall, as not to be worth the pains and riſk of bringing it: 20 rotol of butter coſt a pataka and a half, 3½ harf; or, in one term, 45½ harf. A goat is half of a pataka; a ſheep, two-thirds of a pataka; the ardep of wheat, 4 patakas; Dora, from Arabia, 2 patakas.

> ————*Venit, viliſſima rerum,*
> *Hic aqua.* Horat. lib. 1. Sat. 6. v. 88.

WATER is ſold for three diwanis, or paras, the 7 gallons. The ſame ſort of money is in uſe at Maſuah, and the oppoſite coaſt of Arabia; and it is indeed owing to the commercial intercourſe with that coaſt that any coin is current in this or the weſtern ſide. It is all valued by the Venetian ſequin. But glaſs beads, called Contaria, of all kinds and colours, perfect and broken, paſs for ſmall money, and are called, in their language, Borjooke.

TABLE of the relative VALUE of MONEY.

Venetian Sequin,		—	2¼ Pataka.
Pataka or Imperial Dollar,			28 Harf.
1 Harf,	—	—	4 Diwani.
10 Kibeer,	—	—	1 Diwani,
1 Kibeer,	—	—	3 Borjooke, or Grains.

THE Harf is likewiſe called Dahab, a word very equivocal, as it means, in Arabic, gold, and frequently a ſequin. The Harf is 120 grains of beads.

The zermabub, or ſequin of Conſtantinople, is not current here. Thoſe that have them, can only diſpoſe of them to the women, who hang them about their temples, to their necklaces, and round the necks of their children. The fraction of the pataka is the half and quarter, which paſs here likewiſe.

There is a conſiderable deal of trade carried on at Maſuah, notwithſtanding theſe inconveniencies, narrow and confined as the iſland is, and violent and unjuſt as is the government. But it is all done in a ſlovenly manner, and for articles where a ſmall capital is inveſted. Property here is too precarious to riſk a venture in valuable commodities, where the hand of power enters into every tranſaction.

The goods imported from the Arabian ſide are blue cotton, Surat cloths, and cochineal ditto, called Kermis, fine cloth from different markets in India; coarſe white cotton cloths from Yemen; cotton unſpun from ditto in bales; Venetian beads, chryſtal, drinking, and looking-glaſſes; and cohol, or crude antimony. Theſe three laſt articles come in great quantities from Cairo, firſt in the coffee ſhips to Jidda, and then in ſmall barks over to this port. Old copper too is an article on which much is gained, and great quantity is imported.

The Galla, and all the various tribes to the weſtward of Gondar, wear bracelets of this copper; and they ſay at times, that, near the country of Gongas and Guba, it has been ſold, weight for weight, with gold. There is a ſhell likewiſe here, a univalve of the ſpecies of volutes, which ſells at a cuba for 10 paras. It is brought from near Hodeida, though it is ſometimes found at Konfodah and Loheia. There are a few alſo at Dahalac, but not eſteemed: theſe paſs for money among the Djawi and other weſtern Galla.

The cuba is a wooden meaſure, containing, very exactly, 62 cubic inches of rain water. The drachm is called Caſla; there is 10 drachms in their wakea.

Gold, 16 patakas *per* wakea.
Civet, 1¾ pataka the wakea.
Elephants teeth, 18 patakas for 35 rotol.
Wax, 4 patakas the faranzala.
Myrrh, 3 patakas *per* ditto.
Coffee, 1 pataka the 6 rotol.
Honey, ¼ of a pataka the cuba.

The Banians were once the principal merchants of Maſuah; but the number is now reduced to ſix. They are ſilver-ſmiths, that make ear-rings and other ornaments for the women in the continent, and are aſſayers of gold; they make, however, but a poor livelihood.

As there is no water in Maſuah, the number of animals belonging to it can be but ſmall. The ſea fowl have nothing ſingular in them, and are the grey and the white gull, and the ſmall bird, called the ſea-lark, or pickerel. The ſky-lark is here, but is mute the whole year, till the firſt rains fall in November; he then mounts very high, and ſings in the very heat of the day. I ſaw him in the Tehama, but he did not ſing there; probably for the reaſon given above, as there was no rain.

There are no ſparrows to be ſeen here, or on the oppoſite ſhore, nor in the iſlands. Although there were ſcorpions in abundance at Loheia, we found none of them at Maſuah. Water and greens, eſpecially of the melon and cucumber kind, ſeem to be neceſſary to this poiſonous inſect. Indeed it was only after rains we ſaw them in Loheia, and then the young ones appeared in ſwarms; this was in the end of Auguſt. They are of a dull green colour, bordering upon yellow. As far as I could obſerve, no perſon apprehended any thing from their ſting beyond a few minutes pain.

We left Maſuah the 10th of November, with the ſoldiers and boats belonging to Achmet. We had likewiſe three ſervants from Abyſſinia, and no longer apprehended the Naybe, who ſeemed, on his part, to think no more of us.

In the bay between Maſuah and Arkeeko are two iſlands, Toulahout and Shekh Seide; the firſt on the weſt, the other on the ſouth. They are both uninhabited, and without water. Shekh Seide has a marabout, or ſaint's tomb, on the weſt end. It is not half a mile in length, when not overflowed, but has two large points of ſand which run far out to the eaſt and to the weſt. Its weſt point runs ſo near to Toulahout, as, at low-water, ſcarce to leave a channel for the breadth of a boat to paſs between.

There is a chart, or map of the iſland of Maſuah, handed about with other bad maps and charts of the Red Sea, (of which I have already ſpoken) among our Engliſh captains from India. It ſeems to be of as old date as the firſt landing of the Portugueſe under Don Roderigo de Lima, in the time of David III. but it is very inaccurate, or rather erroneous,

roneous, throughout. The map of the iſland, harbour, and bay, with the ſoundings, which I here have given, may be depended upon, as being done on the ſpot with the greateſt attention.

Achmet, though much better, was, however, not well. His fever had left him, but he had ſome ſymptoms of its being followed by a dyſentery. In the two days I reſted at his houſe, I had endeavoured to remove theſe complaints, and had ſucceeded in part; for which he teſtified the utmoſt gratitude, as he was wonderfully afraid to die.

The Naybe had viſited him ſeveral times every day; but as I was deſirous to ſee Achmet well before I left Arkeeko, I kept out of the way on theſe occaſions, being reſolved, the firſt interview, to preſs for an immediate departure.

On the 13th, at four o'clock in the afternoon, I waited upon the Naybe at his own houſe. He received me with more civility than uſual, or rather, I ſhould have ſaid, with leſs brutality; for a grain of any thing like civility had never yet appeared in his behaviour. He had juſt received news, that a ſervant of his, ſent to collect money at Hamazen, had run off with it. As I ſaw he was buſy, I took my leave of him, only aſking his commands for Habeſh; to which he anſwered, "We have time enough to think of that, do you come here to morrow."

On the 14th, in the morning, I waited upon him according to appointment, having firſt ſtruck my tent and got all my baggage in readineſs. He received me as before, then told me with a grave air, "that he was willing to further my journey into Habeſh to the utmoſt of his power, provided I ſhewed him that conſideration which was due to him from all paſſengers; that as, by my tent, baggage, and arms, he ſaw I was a man above the common ſort, which the grand ſignior's firman, and all my letters teſtified, leſs than 1000 patakas offered by me would be putting a great affront upon him; however, in conſideration of the governor of Tigrè, to whom I was going, he would conſent to receive 300, upon my ſwearing not to divulge this, for fear of the ſhame that would fall upon him abroad.

To this I anſwered in the ſame grave tone, "That I thought him very wrong to take 300 patakas with ſhame, when receiving a thouſand would be more honourable as well as more profitable; therefore he had nothing to do but put that into his account-book with the governor of Tigrè, and ſettle his honour and his intereſt together. As for myſelf, I was ſent for by Metical Aga, on account of the king, and was proceeding accordingly, and if he oppoſed my going forward to Metical Aga, I ſhould return; but then again I ſhould expect ten thouſand patakas from Metical Aga, for the trouble and loſs of time I had been at, which he and the Ras would no doubt ſettle with him." The Naybe ſaid nothing in reply, but only muttered, cloſing his teeth, *ſheitan afrit*, that devil or tormenting ſpirit.

"Look you, (ſays one of the king's ſervants, whom I had not heard ſpeak before) I was ordered to bring this man to my maſter; I heard no talk of patakas; the army is ready to march againſt Waragna Faſil, I muſt not loſe my time here." Then taking his ſhort red cloak under his arm, and giving it a ſhake to make the duſt fly from it, he put it upon his ſhoulders, and, ſtretching out his hand very familiarly, ſaid, "Naybe, within this hour I am for Habeſh, my companion will ſtay here with the man; give me my dues for coming here, and I ſhall carry any anſwer either of you has to ſend." The Naybe looked much diſconcerted. "Beſides, ſaid I, you owe me 300 patakas for ſaving the life of your nephew Achmet."—"Is not his life worth 300 patakas?" He looked very ſilly, and ſaid, "Achmet's life is worth all Maſuah." There was no more talk of patakas after this. He ordered the king's ſervant not to go that day, but come to him to-morrow to receive his letters, and he would expedite us for Habeſh.

THOSE friends that I had made at Arkeeko and Maſuah, ſeeing the Naybe's obſtinacy againſt our departure, and, knowing the cruelty of his nature, adviſed me to abandon all thoughts of Abyſſinia; for that, in paſſing through Samhar, among the many barbarous people whom he commanded, difficulties would multiply upon us daily, and, either by accident, or order of the Naybe, we ſhould ſurely be cut off.

I WAS too well convinced of the embarraſſment that lay behind me if left alone with the Naybe, and too determined upon my journey to heſitate upon going forward. I even flattered myſelf, that his ſtock of ſtratagems to prevent our going, was by this time exhauſted, and that the morrow would ſee us in the open fields, free from further tyranny and controul. In this conjecture I was warranted by the viſible impreſſion the declaration of the king's ſervant had made upon him.

On the 15th, early in the morning, I ſtruck my tent again, and had my baggage prepared, to ſhew we were determined to ſtay no longer. At eight o'clock, I went to the Naybe, and found him almoſt alone, when he received me in a manner that, for him, might have paſſed for civil. He began with a conſiderable degree of eloquence, or fluency of ſpeech, a long enumeration of the difficulties of our journey, the rivers, precipices, mountains, and woods we were to paſs; the number of wild beaſts every where to be found; as alſo the wild ſavage people that inhabited thoſe places; the moſt of which, he ſaid, were luckily under his command, and he would recommend to them to do us all manner of good offices. He commanded two of his ſecretaries to write the proper letters, and, in the mean time, ordered us coffee; converſing naturally enough about the king and Ras Michael, their campaign againſt Faſil, and the great improbability there was, they ſhould be ſucceſsful.

At this time came in a ſervant covered with duſt and ſeemingly fatigued, as having arrived in haſte from afar. The Naybe, with a conſiderable deal of uneaſineſs and confuſion, opened the letters, which were ſaid to bring intelligence, that the Hazorta, Shiho, and Tora, the three nations who poſſeſſed that part of Samhar through which our road led to Dobarwa, the common paſſage from Maſuah to Tigrè, had revolted, driven away his ſervants, and declared themſelves independent. He then, (as if all was over) ordered his ſecretaries to ſtop writing; and, lifting up his eyes, began, with great ſeeming devotion, to thank God we were not already on our journey; for, innocent as he was, when we ſhould have been cut off, the fault would have been imputed to him.

Angry as I was at ſo barefaced a farce, I could not help burſting out into a violent fit of loud laughter, when he put on the ſevereſt countenance, and deſired to know the reaſon of my laughing at ſuch a time. It is now two months, anſwered I, ſince you have been throwing various objections in my way; can you wonder that I do not give into ſo groſs an impoſition? This ſame morning, before I ſtruck my tent, in preſence of your nephew Achmet, I ſpoke with two Shiho juſt arrived from Samhar, who brought letters to Achmet, which ſaid all was in peace. Have you earlier intelligence than that of this morning?

He was for ſome time without ſpeaking; then ſaid, "If you are weary of living, you are welcome to go; but I will do my duty in warning thoſe that are along with you of their and your danger, that, when the miſchief happens, it may not be imputed to me." "No number of naked Shiho," ſaid I, "unleſs inſtructed by you, can ever be found on our road, that will venture to attack us. The Shiho have no fire arms; but if you have ſent on purpoſe ſome of your ſoldiers that have fire arms, theſe will diſcover by what authority they come. For our part, we cannot fly; we neither know the country, the language, nor the watering-places, and we ſhall not attempt it. We have plenty of different ſorts of fire-arms, and your ſervants have often ſeen at Maſuah we are not ignorant in the uſe of them. We, it is true, may loſe our lives, that is in the hand of the Almighty; but we ſhall not fail to leave enough on the ſpot, to give ſufficient indication to the king and Ras Michael,

who

who it was that were our aſſaſſins, Janni of Adowa will explain the reſt."

I THEN roſe very abruptly to go away. It is impoſſible to give one, not converſant with theſe people, any conception what perfect maſters the moſt clowniſh and beaſtly among them are of diſſimulation. The countenance of the Naybe now changed in a moment. In his turn he burſt out into a loud fit of laughter, which ſurpriſed me full as much as mine, ſome time before, had done him. Every feature of his treacherous countenance was altered and ſoftened into complacency; and he, for the firſt time, bore the appearance of a man.

"WHAT I mentioned about the Shiho, he then ſaid, was but to try you; all is peace. I only wanted to keep you here, if poſſible, to cure my nephew Achmet, and his uncle Emir Mahomet; but ſince you are reſolved to go, be not afraid; the roads are ſafe enough. I will give you a perſon to conduct you, that will carry you in ſafety, even if there was danger; only go and prepare ſuch remedies as may be proper for the Emir, and leave them with my nephew Achmet, while I finiſh my letters." This I willingly conſented to do, and at my return I found every thing ready.

OUR guide was a handſome young man, to whom, though a Chriſtian, the Naybe had married his ſiſter; his name was Saloomé. The common price paid for ſuch a conductor is three pieces of blue Surat cotton cloth. The Naybe, however, obliged us to promiſe thirteen to his brother-in-law, with which, to get rid of him with ſome degree of good grace, we willingly complied.

Before our ſetting out I told this to Achmet, who ſaid, that the man was not a bad one naturally, but that his uncle the Naybe made all men as wicked as himſelf. He furniſhed me with a man to ſhew me where I ſhould pitch my tent; and told me he ſhould now take my final deliverance upon himſelf, for we were yet far, according to the Naybe's intentions, from beginning our journey to Gondar.

Arkeeko conſiſts of about 400 houſes, a few of which are built of clay, the reſt of coarſe graſs like reeds. The Naybe's houſe is of theſe laſt-named materials, and not diſtinguiſhed from any others in the town; it ſtands upon the S. W. ſide of a large bay. There is water enough for large ſhips cloſe to Arkeeko, but the bay being open to the N. E. makes it uneaſy riding in blowing weather. Beſides, you are upon a lee-ſhore; the bottom is compoſed of ſoft ſand. In ſtanding in upon Arkeeko from the ſea through the canal between Shekh Seide and the main land, it is neceſſary to range the coaſt about a third nearer the main than the iſland. The point, or Shekh Seide, ſtretches far out, and has ſhallow water upon it.

The Cape that forms the ſouth-weſt ſide of the large bay is called *Ras Gedem*, being the rocky baſe of a high mountain of that name, ſeen a conſiderable diſtance from ſea, and diſtinguiſhed by its form, which is that of a hog's back.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Journey from Arkeeko, over the mountain Taranta, to Dixan.

ACCORDING to Achmet's deſire, we left Arkeeko the 15th, taking our road ſouthward, along the plain, which is not here above a mile broad, and covered with ſhort graſs nothing different from ours, only that the blade is broader. After an hour's journey I pitched my tent at Laberhey, near a pit of rain-water. The mountains of Abyſſinia have a ſingular aſpect from this, as they appear in three ridges. The firſt is of no conſiderable height, but full of gullies and broken ground, thinly covered with ſhrubs; the ſecond, higher and ſteeper, ſtill more rugged and bare; the third is a row of ſharp, uneven-edged mountains, which would be counted high in any country in Europe. Far above the top of all, towers that ſtupendous maſs, the mountain of Taranta, I ſuppoſe one of the higheſt in the world, the point of which is buried in the clouds, and very rarely ſeen but in the cleareſt weather; at other times abandoned to perpetual miſt and darkneſs, the ſeat of lightning, thunder, and of ſtorm.

Taranta is the higheſt of a long, ſteep ridge of mountains, the boundary between *the oppoſite ſeaſons*. On its eaſt ſide, or towards the Red Sea, the rainy ſeaſon is from October to April; and, on the weſtern, or Abyſſinian ſide, cloudy, rainy, and cold weather prevails from May to October.

In the evening, a meſſenger from the Naybe found us at our tent at Laberhey, and carried away our guide Saloomé. It was not till the next day that he appeared again, and with him Achmet, the Naybe's nephew. Achmet made us deliver to him the thirteen pieces of Surat cloth, which was promiſed Saloomè for his hire, and this, apparently, with that perſon's good-will. He then changed four of the men whom the Naybe had furniſhed us for hire to carry our baggage, and put four others in their place; this, not without ſome murmuring on their part; but he peremptorily, and in ſeeming anger, diſpatched them back to Arkeeko.

Achmet now came into the tent, called for coffee, and, while drinking it, ſaid, “ You are ſufficiently perſuaded that I am your friend; if you are not, it is too late now to convince you. It is neceſſary, however, to explain the reaſons of what you ſee. You are not to go to Dobarwa, though it is the beſt road, the ſafeſt being preferable to the eaſieſt. Saloomé knows the road by Dixan as well as the other. You will be apt to curſe me when you are toiling and ſweating aſcending Taranta, the higheſt mountain in Abyſſinia, and on this account worthy your notice. You are then to conſider if the fatigue of body you then ſuffer in that paſſage is not overpaid by the abſolute ſafety you will find yourſelves in. Dobarwa belongs to the Naybe, and I cannot anſwer for the orders he may have given to his own ſervants; but Dixan is mine, although the people are much worſe than thoſe of Dobarwa. I have written to my officers there; they will behave the better to you for this; and, as you are ſtrong and robuſt, the beſt I can do for you is to ſend you by a rugged road, and a ſafe one.

ACHMET again gave his orders to Saloomé, and we, all riſing, ſaid the fedtah, or *prayer of peace*; which being over, his ſervant gave him a narrow web of muſlin, which, with his own hands, he wrapped round my head in the manner the better ſort of Mahometans wear it at Dixan. He then parted, ſaying, "He that is your enemy is mine alſo; you ſhall hear of me by Mahomet Gibberti."

THIS finiſhed a ſeries of trouble and vexation, not to ſay danger, ſuperior to any thing I ever before had experienced, and of which the bare recital (though perhaps too minute a one) will give but an imperfect idea. Theſe wretches poſſeſs talents for tormenting and alarming, far beyond the power of belief; and, by laying a true ſketch of them before a traveller, an author does him the moſt real ſervice. In this country the more truely we draw the portrait of man, the more we ſeem to fall into caricatura.

ON the 16th, in the evening, we left Laberhey; and, after continuing about an hour along the plain, our graſs ended, the ground becoming dry, firm, and gravelly, and we then entered into a wood of acacia-trees of conſiderable ſize. We now began to aſcend gradually, having Gedem, the high mountain which forms the bay of Arkeeko, on our left, and theſe ſame mountains, which bound the plain of Arkeeko to the weſt, on our right. We encamped this night on a riſing-ground called Shillokeeb, where there is no water, though the mountains were everywhere cut through with gullies and water courſes, made by the violent rains that fall here in winter.

The 17th, we continued along the ſame plain, ſtill covered thick with acacia-trees. They were then in bloſſom, had a round yellow flower, but we ſaw no gum upon the trees. Our direction had hitherto been ſouth. We turned weſterly through an opening in the mountains, which here ſtand ſo cloſe together as to leave no valley or plain ſpace between them but what is made by the torrents, in the rainy ſeaſon, forcing their way with great violence to the ſea.

The bed of the torrent was our only road; and, as it was all ſand, we could not wiſh for a better. The moiſture it had ſtrongly imbibed protected it from the ſudden effects of the ſun, and produced, all alongſt its courſe, a great degree of vegetation and verdure. Its banks were full of rack-trees, capers, and tamarinds; the two laſt bearing larger fruit than I had ever before ſeen, though not arrived to their greateſt ſize or maturity.

We continued this winding, according to the courſe of the river, among mountains of no great height, but bare, ſtony, and full of terrible precipices. At half paſt eight o'clock we halted, to avoid the heat of the ſun, under ſhade of the trees before mentioned, for it was then exceſſively hot, though in the month of November, from ten in the morning till two in the afternoon. We met this day with large numbers of Shiho, having their wives and families along with them, deſcending from the tops of the high mountains of Habeſh, with their flocks to paſture, on the plains below near the ſea, upon graſs that grows up in the months of October and November, when they have already conſumed what grew in the oppoſite ſeaſon on the other ſide of the mountains.

This change of domicil gives them a propenſity to thieving and violence, though otherwiſe a cowardly tribe. It is a proverb in Abyſſinia, "Beware of men that drink *two* waters," meaning theſe, and all the tribes of *Shepherds*, who were in ſearch of paſture, and who have lain under the ſame imputation from the remoteſt antiquity.

The Shiho were once very numerous; but, like all theſe nations having communication with Maſuah, have ſuffered much by the ravages of the ſmall-pox. The Shiho are the blackeſt of the tribes bordering upon the Red Sea. They were all clothed; their women in coarſe cotton ſhifts reaching down to their ancles, girt about the middle with a leather belt, and having very large ſleeves; the men in ſhort cotton breeches reaching to the middle of their thighs, and a goat's ſkin croſs their ſhoulders. They have neither tents nor cottages, but either live in caves in the mountains under trees, or in ſmall conical huts built with a thick graſs like reeds.

This party conſiſted of about fifty men, and, I ſuppoſe, not more than thirty women; from which it ſeemed probable the Shiho are Monogam, as afterwards, indeed, I knew them to be. Each of them had a lance in his hand, and a knife at the girdle which kept up the breeches. They had the ſuperiority of the ground, as coming down the mountain which we were aſcending; yet I obſerved them to ſeem rather uneaſy at meeting us; and ſo far from any appearance of hoſtility, that, I believe, had we attacked briſkly, they would have fled without much reſiſtance. They were, indeed, incumbered with a prodigious quantity of goats and other cattle, ſo were not in a fighting trim. I ſaluted the man that ſeemed to be their chief, and aſked him if he would ſell us a goat. He returned my ſalute; but either could not ſpeak Arabic, or declined further converſation. However, thoſe of our people behind, that were of a colour nearer to themſelves, bought us a goat that was lame, (dearly they ſaid) for ſome antimony, four large needles, and ſome beads. Many of them aſked us for *kiſſerab*, or bread. This being an Arabic word, and their having no other word in their language ſignifying bread, convinces me they were Icthyophagi; as, indeed, hiſtory ſays all thoſe Troglydite nations were who lived upon the Red Sea. It could not indeed be otherwiſe: the rich, when trade flouriſhed in theſe parts, would probably get corn from Arabia or Abyſſinia; but, in their own country, no corn would grow.

AT 2 o'clock in the afternoon we reſumed our journey through a very ſtony, uneven road, till 5 o'clock, when we pitched our tent at a place called Hamhammou, on the ſide of a ſmall green hill ſome hundred yards from the bed of the torrent. The weather had been perfectly good ſince we left Maſuah: this afternoon, however, it ſeemed to threaten rain; the high mountains were quite hid, and great part of the lower ones covered with thick clouds; the lightning was very frequent, broad, and deep-tinged with blue; and long peals of thunder were heard, but at a diſtance.

tance. This was the firſt ſample we had of Abyſſinian bad weather.

The river ſcarcely ran at our paſſing it; when, all on a ſudden, we heard a noiſe on the mountains above, louder than the loudeſt thunder. Our guides, upon this, flew to the baggage, and removed it to the top of the green hill; which was no ſooner done, than we ſaw the river coming down in a ſtream about the height of a man, and breadth of the whole bed it uſed to occupy. The water was thick, tinged with red earth, and ran in the form of a deep river, and ſwelled a little above its banks, but did not reach our ſtation on the hill.

An antelope, ſurpriſed by the torrent, and I believe hurt by it, was forced over into the peninſula where we were, ſeemingly in great diſtreſs. As ſoon as my companions ſaw there was no further danger from the river, they ſurrounded this innocent comrade in misfortune, and put him to death with very little trouble to themſelves. The acquiſition was not great; it was lean, had a muſky taſte, and was worſe meat than the goat we had bought from the Shiho. The torrent, though now very ſenſibly diminiſhed, ſtill preſerved a current till next morning.

Between Hamhammou and Shillokeeb we firſt ſaw the dung of elephants, full of pretty thick pieces of indigeſted branches. We likewiſe, in many places, ſaw the tracks thro' which they had paſſed; ſome trees were thrown down from the roots, ſome broken in the middle, and branches half-eaten ſtrewed on the ground.

Hamhammou is a mountain of black ſtones, almoſt calcined by the violent heat of the ſun. This is the boundary of the diſtrict; Samhar, inhabited by the Shiho from Hamhammou to Taranta, is called Hadaſſa; it belongs to the Hazorta.

This nation, though not ſo numerous as the Shiho, are yet their neighbours, live in conſtant defiance of the Naybe, and are of a colour much reſembling new copper; but are inferior to the Shiho in ſize, though very agile. All their ſubſtance is in cattle; yet they kill none of them, but live entirely upon milk. They, too, want alſo an original word for bread in their language, for the ſame reaſon, I ſuppoſe, as the Shiho. They have been generally ſucceſsful againſt the Naybe, and live either in caves, or in cabannes, like cages, juſt large enough to hold two perſons, and covered with an ox's hide. Some of the better ſort of women have copper bracelets upon their arms, beads in their hair, and a tanned hide wrapt about their ſhoulders.

The nights are cold here even in ſummer, and do not allow the inhabitants to go naked as upon the reſt of the coaſt; however, the children of the Shiho, whom we met firſt, were all naked.

The 18th, at half paſt five in the morning, we left our ſtation on the ſide of the green hill at Hamhammou: for ſome time our road lay through a plain ſo thick ſet with acacia-trees that our hands and faces were all torn and bloody with the ſtrokes of their thorny branches. We then reſumed our ancient road in the bed of the torrent, now nearly ly dry, over ſtones which the rain of the preceding night had made very ſlippery.

At half paſt ſeven we came to the mouth of a narrow valley, through which a ſtream of water ran very ſwiftly over a bed of pebbles. It was the firſt clear water we had ſeen ſince we left Syria, and gave us then unſpeakable pleaſure. It was in taſte excellent. The ſhade of the tamarind-tree, and the coolneſs of the air, invited us to reſt on this delightful ſpot, though otherwiſe, perhaps, it was not exactly conformable to the rules of prudence, as we ſaw ſeveral huts and families of the Hazorta along the ſide of the ſtream, with their flocks feeding on the branches of trees and buſhes, entirely neglectful of the graſs they were treading under foot.

The caper-tree here grows as high as the talleſt Engliſh elm; its flower is white, and its fruit, though not ripe, was fully as large as an apricot.

I went ſome diſtance to a ſmall pool of water in order to bathe, and took my firelock with me; but none of the ſavages ſtirred from their huts, nor ſeemed to regard me more than if I had lived among them all their lives, though ſurely I was the moſt extraordinary ſight they had ever ſeen; whence I concluded that they are a people of ſmall talents or genius, having no curioſity.

At two o'clock we continued our journey, among large timber trees, till half paſt three, along the ſide of the rivulet, when we loſt it. At half paſt four we pitched our tent at Sadoon, by the ſide of another ſtream, as clear, as ſhallow, and as beautiful as the firſt; but the night here was exceedingly cold, though the ſun had been hot in the day-time. Our deſire for water was, by this time, conſiderably abated. We were everywhere ſurrounded by mountains, bleak, bare, black, and covered with looſe ſtones, entirely deſtitute of ſoil; and, beſides this gloomy proſpect, we ſaw nothing but the heavens.

On the 19th, at half paſt ſix in the morning, we left Sadoon, our road ſtill winding between mountains in the bed, or torrent of a river, bordered on each ſide with rack and ſycamore trees of a good ſize. I thought them equal to the largeſt trees I had ever ſeen; but upon conſidering, and roughly meaſuring ſome of them, I did not find one 7½ feet diameter; a ſmall tree in compariſon of thoſe that ſome travellers have obſerved, and much ſmaller than I expected; for here every cauſe concurred that ſhould make the growth of theſe large bodies exceſſive.

At half paſt eight o'clock, we encamped at a place called Tubbo, where the mountains are very ſteep, and broken, very abruptly, into cliffs and precipices. Tubbo was by much the moſt agreeable ſtation we had ſeen; the trees were thick, full of leaves, and gave us abundance of very dark ſhade. There was a number of many different kinds ſo cloſely planted that they ſeemed to be intended for natural arbours. Every tree was full of birds, variegated with an infinity of colours, but deſtitute of ſong; others, of a more homely and more European appearance, diverted us with a variety of wild notes, in a ſtile of muſic ſtill diſtinct and peculiar to Africa; as different in the compoſition from our linnet and goldfinch, as our Engliſh language is to that of Abyſſinia: Yet, from very attentive and frequent obſervation, I found that the ſky-lark at Maſuah ſang the ſame notes as in England. It was obſervable, that the greateſt part of the beautiful painted birds were of the jay, or magpie kind: nature ſeemed, by the fineneſs of their dreſs, to have marked them for children of noiſe and impertinence, but never to have intended them for pleaſure or meditation.

The reaſon of the Hazorta making, as it were, a fixed ſtation here at Tubbo, ſeems to be the great exuberancy of the foliage of theſe large trees. Their principal occupation ſeemed to be to cut down the branches moſt within their reach; and this, in a dry ſeaſon, nearly ſtripped every tree; and, upon failure of theſe, they remove their flocks, whatever quantity of graſs remained.

The ſycamores conſtitute a large proportion of theſe trees, and they are everywhere loaded with figs; but the proceſs of caprification being unknown to theſe ſavages, theſe figs come to nothing, which elſe might be a great reſource for food at times, in a country which ſeems almoſt deſtitute of the neceſſaries of life.

We left Tubbo at three o'clock in the afternon, and we wiſhed to leave the neighbourhood of the Hazorta. At four, we encamped at Lila, where we paſſed the night in a narrow valley, full of trees and bruſhwood, by the ſide of a rivulet. Theſe ſmall, but delightful ſtreams, which appear on the plain between Taranta and the ſea, run only after October. When the ſummer rains in Abyſſinia are ceaſing, they begin again on the eaſt ſide of the mountains; at other times, no running water is to be found here, but it remains ſtagnant in large pools, whilſt its own depth, or the ſhade of the mountains and trees, prevent it from being exhaled by the heat of the ſun till they are again repleniſhed with freſh ſupplies, which are poured into them upon return of the rainy ſeaſon. Hitherto we had conſtantly aſcended from our leaving Arkeeko, but it was very gradually, indeed almoſt imperceptibly.

On the 20th, at ſix o'clock in the morning, we left our ſtation at Lila, and about ſeven we began to aſcend the hills, or eminences, which ſerve as the roots or ſkirts of the great mountain Taranta. The road was on each ſide bordered with nabca, or jujeb trees of great beauty, and ſycamores perfectly deprived of their verdure and branches.

We ſaw to-day plenty of game. The country here is everywhere deprived of the ſhade it would enjoy from theſe fine trees, by the barbarous axes of the Hazorta. We found everywhere immenſe flocks of antelopes; as alſo partridges of a ſmall kind that willingly took refuge upon trees; neither of theſe ſeemed to conſider us as enemies. The antelopes let us paſs through their flocks, only removing to the right or to the left, or ſtanding ſtill and gazing upon us till we paſſed. But, as we were then on the confines of Tigrè, or rather on the territory of the Baharnagaſh, and as the Hazorta were in motion everywhere removing towards the coaſt, far from the dominions of the Abyſſinians to which we were going, a friend of their own tribe, who had joined us for ſafety, knowing how little truſt was to be put in his countrymen when moving in this contrary direction, adviſed us by no means to fire, or give any unneceſſary indication of the ſpot where we were, till we gained the mountain of Taranta, at the foot of which we halted at nine in the morning.

At half paſt two o'clock in the afternoon we began to aſcend the mountain, through a moſt rocky, uneven road, if it can deſerve the name, not only from its incredible ſteepneſs, but from the large holes and gullies made by the torrents, and the huge monſtrous fragments of rocks which, looſened by the water, had been tumbled down into our way. It was with great difficulty we could creep up, each man carrying his knapſack and arms; but it ſeemed beyond the poſſibility of human ſtrength to carry our baggage and inſtruments. Our tent, indeed, ſuffered nothing by its falls; but our teleſcopes, time-keeper, and quadrant, were to be treated in a more deliberate and tender manner.

Our quadrant had hitherto been carried by eight men, four to relieve each other; but theſe were ready to give up the undertaking upon trial of the firſt few hundred yards. A number of expedients, ſuch as trailing it on the ground, (all equally fatal to the inſtrument) were propoſed. At laſt, as I was incomparably the ſtrongeſt of the company, as well as the moſt intereſted, I, and a ſtranger Moor who had followed us, carried the head of it for about 400 yards over the moſt difficult and ſteepeſt part of the mountain, which before had been conſidered as impracticable by all.

Yasine was the name of that Moor, recommended to me by Metical Aga, of whom I have already ſpoken a little, and ſhall be obliged to ſay much more; a perſon whom I had diſcovered to be a man of a moſt ſagacious turn of mind, firm heart, and ſtrenuous nerves; never more diſtinguiſhed for all theſe qualities than in the hour of imminent danger; at other times remarkable for quietneſs and ſilence, and a conſtant ſtudy of his Koran.

We carried it ſteadily up the ſteep, eaſed the caſe gently over the big ſtones on which, from time to time, we reſted it; and, to the wonder of them all, placed the head of the three-foot quadrant, with its double caſe, in ſafety far above the ſtony parts of the mountain. At Yaſine's requeſt we again undertook the next moſt difficult taſk, which was to carry the iron foot of the quadrant in a ſingle deal-caſe, not ſo heavy, indeed, nor ſo liable to injury, but ſtill what had been pronounced impoſſible to carry up ſo ſteep and rugged a mountain; and refuſing then the faint offers of thoſe that ſtood gazing below, excuſing themſelves by foretelling an immediate and certain miſcarriage, we placed the ſecond caſe about ten yards above the firſt in perfect good condition.

Declaring ourſelves now without fear of contradiction, and, by the acknowledgment of all, upon fair proof, the two beſt men in the company, we returned, bearing very viſibly the characters of ſuch an exertion; our hands and knees were all cut, mangled, and bleeding, with ſliding down and clambering over the ſharp points of the rocks; our clothes torn to pieces; yet we profeſſed our ability, without any reproaches on our comrades, to carry the two teleſcopes and time-keeper alſo. Shame, and the proof of ſuperior conſtancy, ſo much humbled the reſt of our companions, that one and all put their hands ſo briſkly to work, that, with infinite toil, and as much pleaſure, we advanced ſo far as to place all our inſtruments and baggage, about two o'clock in the afternoon, near half way up this terrible mountain of Taranta.

There were five aſſes, two of which belonged to Yaſine, and theſe were fully as difficult to bring up the mountain as any of our burdens. Moſt of their loading, the property of Yaſine, we carried up the length of my inſtruments; and it was propoſed, as a thing that one man could do, to make the unladen light aſſes follow, as they had been well taken care of, were vigorous and young, and had not ſuffered by the ſhort journies we had made on plain ground. They no ſooner, however, found themſelves at liberty, and that a man was compelling them with a ſtick to aſcend the mountain, than they began to bray, to kick, and to bite each other; and, as it were with one conſent, not only ran down the part of the hill we had aſcended, but, with the ſame jovial cries as before, (ſmelling, I ſuppoſe, ſome of their companions) they continued on at a briſk trot; and, as we ſuppoſed, would never ſtop till they came to Tubbo, and the huts of the Hazorta.

All our little caravan, and eſpecially the maſters of theſe animals, ſaw from above, in deſpair, all our eagerneſs to paſs Taranta defeated by the ſeceſſion of the moſt obſtinate of the brute creation. But there was no mending this by reflection; at the ſame time, we were ſo tired as to make it impoſſible for the principals to give any aſſiſtance. Bread was to be baked, and ſupper to be made ready, after this fatiguing journey.

At length four Moors, one of them a ſervant of Yaſine, with one firelock, were ſent down after the aſſes; and the men were ordered to fire at a diſtance, ſo as to be heard in caſe any thing diſhoneſt was offered on the part of the Hazorta. But luckily the appetite of the aſſes returning, they had fallen to eat the buſhes, about half way to Lila, where they were found a little before ſun-ſet.

The number of hyænas that are everywhere among the buſhes, had, as we ſuppoſed, been ſeen by theſe animals, and had driven them all into a body. It was probable that this, too, made them more docile, ſo that they ſuffered themſelves to be driven on before their maſters. The hyænas, however, followed them ſtep by ſtep, always increaſing in number; and, the men, armed only with lances, began to be fully as much afraid for themſelves as for the aſſes. At laſt the hyænas became ſo bold, that one of them ſeized the aſs belonging to the poor Moor, whoſe cargo was yet lying at the foot of Taranta, and pulled him down, though the man ran to him and relieved him with lances. This would have begun a general engagement with the hyænas, had not Yaſine's man that carried the firelock diſcharged it amongſt them, but miſſed them all. However, it anſwered the purpoſe; they diſappeared, and left the aſſes and aſs-drivers to purſue their way.

The ſhot, for a moment, alarmed us all upon the mountain. Every man ran to his arms to prepare for the coming of the Hazorta; but a moment's reflection upon the ſhort time the men had been away, the diſtance between us and Tubbo, and the ſmall ſpace that it ſeemed to be from where the gun was fired, made us all conclude the man had only intended by the ſhot to let us know they were at hand, tho' it was not till near midnight before our long-eared companions joined their maſters.

We found it impoſſible to pitch our tents, from the extreme wearineſs in which our laſt night's exertion had left us: But there was another reaſon alſo; for there was not earth enough covering the bare ſides of Taranta to hold faſt a tent-pin; but there were variety of caves near us, and throughout the mountain, which had ſerved for houſes to the old inhabitants; and in theſe found a quiet and not inconvenient place of repoſe, the night of the 20th of November.

All this ſide of the mountain of Taranta, which we had paſſed, was thick-ſet with a ſpecies of tree which we had never before ſeen, but which was of uncommon beauty and curious compoſition of parts; its name is *kol-quall**. Though we afterwards met it in ſeveral places of Abyſſinia, it never was in the perfection we now ſaw it in Taranta.

On the 21ſt, at half paſt ſix in the morning, having encouraged my company with good words, increaſe of wages, and hopes of reward, we began to encounter the other half of the mountain, but, before we ſet out, ſeeing that the aſs of the ſtranger Moor, which was bit by the hyæna, was incapable of carrying his loading further, I deſired the reſt every one to bear a proportion of the loading till we ſhould arrive at Dixan, where I promiſed to procure him another which might enable him to continue his journey.

---

* See the article kol-quall in the appendix.

This propoſal gave univerſal ſatisfaction to our Mahometan attendants. Yaſine ſwore that my conduct was a reproach to them all, for that, though a Chriſtian, I had ſet them an example of charity to their poor brother, highly neceſſary to procure God's bleſſing upon their journey, but which ſhould properly have come firſt from themſelves. After a great deal of ſtrife of kindneſs, it was agreed that I ſhould pay one-third, that the lame aſs ſhould go for what it was worth, and the Moors of the caravan make up the difference.

This being ended, I ſoon perceived the good effect. My baggage moved much more briſkly than the preceding day. The upper part of the mountain was, indeed, ſteeper, more craggy, rugged, and ſlippery than the lower, and impeded more with trees, but not embarraſſed ſo much with large ſtones and holes. Our knees and hands, however, were cut to pieces by frequent falls, and our faces torn by the multitude of thorny buſhes. I twenty times now thought of what Achmet had told me at parting, that I ſhould curſe him for the bad road ſhewn to me over Taranta; but bleſs him for the quiet and ſafety attending me in that paſſage.

The middle of the mountain was thinner of trees than the two extremes; they were chiefly wild olives which bear no fruit. The upper part was cloſe covered with groves of the oxy cedrus, the Virginia, or berry-bearing cedar, in the language of the country called Arze. At laſt we gained the top of the mountain, upon which is ſituated a ſmall vil-

lage

lage called Halai, the firſt we had ſeen ſince our leaving Maſuah. It is chiefly inhabited by poor ſervants and ſhepherds keeping the flocks of men of ſubſtance living in the town of Dixan.

THE people here are not black, but of a dark complexion bordering very much upon yellow. They have their head bare; their feet covered with ſandals; a goat's ſkin upon their ſhoulders; a cotton cloth about their middle; their hair ſhort and curled like that of a negroe's in the weſt part of Africa; but this is done by art, not by nature, each man having a wooden ſtick with which he lays hold of the lock and twiſts it round a ſcrew, till it curls in the form he deſires*. The men carry in their hands two lances and a large ſhield of bull's hide. A crooked knife, the blade in the lower part about three inches broad, but diminiſhing to a point about ſixteen inches long, is ſtuck at their right ſide, in a girdle of coarſe cotton cloth, with which their middle is ſwathed, going round them ſix times.

ALL ſorts of cattle are here in great plenty; cows and bulls of exquiſite beauty, eſpecially the former; they are, for the moſt part, completely white, with large dewlaps hanging down to their knees; their heads, horns, and hoofs perfectly well-turned; the horns wide like our Lincolnſhire kine; and their hair like ſilk. Their ſheep are large, and all black. I never ſaw one of any other colour in the province of Tigré. Their heads are large; their ears remarkably ſhort and ſmall; inſtead of the wool they have hair, as all the ſheep within the tropics have, but this is remarkable for its luſtre and ſoftneſs, without any briſtly quality, ſuch as thoſe in Beja, or the country of Sennaar; but they are neither ſo fat, nor is their fleſh ſo good, as that of the ſheep in the warmer country. The goats here, too, are of the largeſt ſize; but they are not very rough, nor is their hair long.

---

* I apprehend this is the ſame inſtrument uſed by the ancients, and cenſured by the prophets, which, in our tranſlation, is rendered criſping-pins. Iſa. chap. iii. ver. 22.

THE plain on the top of the mountain Taranta was, in many places, ſown with wheat, which was then ready to be cut down, though the harveſt was not yet begun. The grain was clean, and of a good colour, but inferior in ſize to that of Egypt. It did not, however, grow thick, nor was the ſtalk above fourteen inches high. The water is very bad on the top of Taranta, being only what remains of the rain in the hollows of the rocks, and in pits prepared for it.

BEING very tired, we pitched our tent on the top of the mountain. The night was remarkably cold, at leaſt appeared ſo to us, whoſe pores were opened by the exceſſive heat of Maſuah; for at mid-day the thermometer ſtood 61°, and at ſix in the evening 59°; the barometer, at the ſame time, 18½ inches French. The dew began to fall ſtrongly, and ſo continued till an hour after ſun-ſet, though the ſky was perfectly clear, and the ſmalleſt ſtars diſcernible.

I KILLED a large eagle here this evening, about ſix feet ten inches from wing to wing. It ſeemed very tame till ſhot. The ball having wounded it but ſlightly, when on the ground it could not be prevented from attacking the men or beaſts near it with great force and fierceneſs, ſo that I was obliged to ſtab it with a bayonet. It was of a dirty white; only the head and upper part of its wings were of a light brown.

On the 22d, at eight in the morning, we left our ſtation on the top of Taranta, and ſoon after began to deſcend on the ſide of Tigré through a road the moſt broken and uneven that ever I had ſeen, always excepting the aſcent of Taranta. After this we began to mount a ſmall hill, from which we had a diſtinct view of Dixan.

The cedar-trees, ſo tall and beautiful on the top of Taranta, and alſo on the eaſt ſide, were greatly degenerated when we came to the weſt, and moſtly turned into ſmall ſhrubs and ſcraggy buſhes. We pitched our tent near ſome marſhy ground for the ſake of water, at three quarters paſt ten, but it was very bad, having been, for ſeveral weeks, ſtagnant. We ſaw here the people buſy at their wheat harveſt; others, who had finiſhed theirs, were treading it out with cows or bullocks. They make no uſe of their ſtraw; ſometimes they burn it, and ſometimes leave it on the ſpot to rot.

We ſet out from this about ten minutes after three, deſcending gently through a better road than we had hitherto ſeen. At half paſt four in the evening, on the 22d of November, we came to Dixan. Halai was the firſt village, ſo is this the firſt town in Abyſſinia, on the ſide of Taranta. Dixan is built on the top of a hill, perfectly in form of a ſugar loaf; a deep valley ſurrounds it everywhere like a trench;

trench, and the road winds ſpirally up the hill till it ends among the houſes.

This town, with a large diſtrict, and a conſiderable number of villages, belonged formerly to the Baharnagaſh, and was one of the ſtrong places under his command. Afterwards, when his power came to be weakened, and his office in diſrepute by his treaſonable behaviour in the war of the Turks, and civil war that followed it, during the Portugueſe ſettlement in the reign of Socinios, the Turks poſſeſſing the ſea-ports, and being often in intelligence with him, it was thought proper to wink at the uſurpations of the governors of Tigrè, who, little by little, reduced this office to be dependent on their power.

Dixan, preſuming upon its ſtrength, declared for independence in the time the two parties were contending; and, as it was inhabited moſtly by Mahometans, it was ſecretly ſupported by the Naybe. Michael Suhul, however, governor of Tigré, in the reign of king Yaſous II. inveſted it with a large army of horſe and foot; and, as it had no water but what was in the valley below, the general defect of theſe lofty ſituations, he ſurrounded the town, encamping upon the edge of the valley, and incloſed all the water within his line of circumvallation, making ſtrong poſts at every watering-place, defended by fire-arms.

He then ſent to them a buffoon, or dwarf, deſiring them to ſurrender within two hours. The paſſions of the inhabitants were, however, raiſed by expectations of ſuccour from the Naybe; and they deteſted Michael above every thing that could be imagined. They, therefore, whipt the dwarf, and inflicted other marks of contumely upon him. Michael bore this with ſeeming indifference. He ſent no more ſummonſes, but ſtrengthened his poſts, and ordered them to be continually viſited. Several attacks of no conſequence were made by the beſieged following large ſtones, which were rolled down into the trench, but all to no purpoſe. A general attack, however, from the town, was tried the third day, by which one well was carried, and many relieved their thirſt; many died there, and the reſt were forced back into the town. A capitulation was now offered; but Michael anſwered, he waited for the coming of the Naybe. About 700 people are ſaid to have died, during the ſiege, with thirſt; and at laſt, there being no proſpect of relief, twelve of the leaders were delivered and hanged up at the wells. The town ſurrendered at diſcretion, and the ſoldiers finiſhed thoſe whom thirſt had ſpared.

Michael then farmed Dixan to the Naybe, who repeopled it. There was a high and low town, divided from each other by a conſiderable ſpace. In the lower abode Chriſtians, at leaſt ſo calling themſelves; on the top of the hill were the Naybe's party, who had dug for themſelves a ſcanty well. Saloomé, our guide, was ſon of the governor for the Naybe. Achmet was the perſon the Moors in the low town had confided in; and the Chriſtian chief was a dependent upon Janni, our Greek friend at Adowa, who had direction of all the cuſtom-houſes in Tigrè, and of that at Dixan among the reſt.

Our baggage had paſſed the trench, and had reached the low town through which Saloomè had conducted me, under pretence of getting a ſpeedy ſhelter from the heat:

but he overacted his part; and Janni, his ſervant, who ſpoke Greek, giving me a hint to go no further, I turned ſhort towards the houſe, and ſat down with my firelock upon a ſtone at the door. Our baggage quickly followed, and all was put ſafe in a kind of a court incloſed with a ſufficient ſtone-wall.

It was not long till Hagi Abdelcader, Achmet's friend, came to us, inviting me civilly to his houſe, and declaring to me the friendly orders he had received from Achmet concerning me; bringing along with him alſo a goat, ſome butter and honey. I excuſed myſelf from leaving Janni's friend, the Chriſtian, where I had firſt alighted; but I recommended Yaſine to him, for he had begun to ſhew great attachment to me. In about a quarter of an hour came Saloomé, with about twenty men, and demanded us, in the name of the Naybe, as his ſtrangers: he ſaid we owed him money for conducting us, and likewiſe for the cuſtomhouſe dues. In a moment near a hundred men were aſſembled round Hagi Abdelcader, all with ſhields and lances, and we expected to ſee a fray of the moſt ſerious kind. But Abdelcader, with a ſwitch in his hand, went gravely up to Saloomè, and, after chiding his party with great authority, he held up his ſtick twice over Saloomé's head, as if to ſtrike him; then ordered him, if he had any demands, to come to him in the evening; upon which both parties diſperſed, and left us in peace.

The matter was ſettled in the evening with Saloomé in an amicable manner. It was proved that thirteen pieces of blue cloth were the hire agreed on, and that it had been paid by his order to Achmet; and, though he deſerved nothing

thing for his treacherous inclinations towards us, yet, for Achmet's ſake, and our friend Hagi Abdelcader's, we made him a preſent of three pieces more.

It is true of Dixan as, I believe, of moſt frontier towns, that the bad people of both contiguous countries reſort thither. The town, as I before have ſaid, conſiſts of Moors and Chriſtians, and is very well peopled; yet the only trade of either of theſe ſects is a very extraordinary one, that of ſelling of children. The Chriſtians bring ſuch as they have ſtolen in Abyſſinia to Dixan as to a ſure depoſit; and the Moors receive them there, and carry them to a certain market at Maſuah, whence they are ſent over to Arabia or India. The prieſts of the province of Tigré, eſpecially thoſe near the rock Damo, are openly concerned in this infamous practice; and ſome of theſe have been licenſed by Michael to carry it on as a fair trade, upon paying ſo many firelocks for each dozen or ſcore of ſlaves.

Nothing can elucidate the footing upon which this trade ſtands better than a tranſaction which happened while I was in Ethiopia, and which reached Gondar by way of complaint from Maſuah, and was told me by Michael himſelf.

Two prieſts of Tigrè, whoſe names I have forgot, had been long intimate friends. They dwelt near the rock Damo. The youngeſt was married, and had two children, both ſons; the other was old, and had none. The old one reproved his friend one day for keeping his children at home idle, and not putting them to ſome profeſſion by which they might gain their bread. The married prieſt pleaded his poverty and his want of relations that could aſſiſt him; on which, the old prieſt offered to place his eldeſt ſon with a rich friend of his own, who had no children, and where he ſhould want for nothing. The propoſal was accepted, and the young lad, about ten years of age, was delivered by his father to the old prieſt, to carry him to this friend, who ſent the boy to Dixan and ſold him there. Upon the old prieſt's return, after giving the father a ſplendid account of his ſon's reception, treatment, and proſpects, he gave him a piece of cotton cloth, as a preſent from his ſon's patron.

The younger child, about eight years old, hearing the good fortune of his elder brother, became ſo importunate to be allowed to go and viſit him, that the parents were obliged to humour him, and conſent. But the old prieſt had a ſcruple, ſaying he would not take the charge of ſo young a boy, unleſs his mother went with him. This being ſettled, the old prieſt conveyed them to the market at Dixan, where he ſold both the mother and the remaining child.

Returning to the father, the old prieſt told him, that his wife would ſtay only ſo long, and expected he would then fetch her upon a certain day, which was named. The day being come, the two prieſts went together to ſee this happy family; and, upon their entering Dixan, it was found that the old prieſt had ſold the young one, but not to the ſame Moor to whom he had ſold his family. Soon after, theſe two Moors, who had bought the Chriſtians, becoming partners in the venture, the old prieſt was to receive forty cotton-cloths, that is, L. 10 Sterling, for the huſband, wife, and children.

The payment of the money, perhaps the reſentment of the family trepanned, and the appearance of equity which the thing itſelf bore, ſuggeſted to the Mooriſh merchants that there was ſome more profit, and not more riſk, if they carried off the old prieſt likewiſe. But as he had come to Dixan, as it were under public faith, in a trade that greatly intereſted the town, they were afraid to attempt any thing againſt him whilſt there. They began then as it were to repent of their bargain, from a pretended apprehenſion that they might be ſtopped and queſtioned at going out of town, unleſs he would accompany them to ſome ſmall diſtance; in conſideration of which, they would give him, at parting, two pieces of cloth to be added to the other forty, which he was to take back to Tigrê with him upon his return.

The beginning of ſuch expeditions is in the night. When all were aſleep, they ſet out from Dixan; the buyers, the ſeller, and the family ſold; and, being arrived near the mountain where the way turns off to the deſert, the whole party fell upon the old prieſt, threw him down, and bound him. The woman inſiſted that ſhe might be allowed to cut, or tear off the little beard he had, in order, as ſhe ſaid, to make him look younger; and this demand was reckoned too juſt to be denied her. The whole five were then carried to Maſuah; the woman and her two children were ſold to Arabia; the two prieſts had not ſo ready a market, and they were both in the Naybe's houſe when I was at Maſuah, though I did not then know it.

The Naybe, willing to ingratiate himſelf with Ras Michael at a ſmall expence, wrote to him an account of the tranſaction, and offered, as they were prieſts, to reſtore them to him. But the Ras returned for anſwer, that the Nabye ſhould keep them to be his chaplains; as he hoped, ſome day, he would be converted to the Chriſtian faith himſelf; if not, he might ſend them to Arabia with the reſt; they would ſerve to be carriers of wood and drawers of water; and that there ſtill remained at Damo enough of their kind to carry on the trade with Dixan and Maſuah.

This ſtory I heard from Ras Michael himſelf, at his grand-daughter's marriage, when he was feaſting, and in great ſpirits. He, and all the company, laughed heartily; and although there were in the room at leaſt two dozen of prieſts, none of them ſeemed to take this incident more ſeriouſly than the reſt of the company. From this we may gueſs at the truth of what the Catholic writers advance, with regard to the reſpect and reverence ſhown to the prieſthood by the government and great men in Abyſſinia.

The prieſt of Axum, and thoſe of the monaſtery of Abba Garima, are equally infamous with thoſe of Damo for this practice, which is winked at by Ras Michael, as contributing to his greatneſs, by furniſhing fire-arms to his province of Tigré, which gives him a ſuperiority over all Abyſſinia. As a return for this article, about five hundred of theſe unfortunate people are exported annually from Maſuah to Arabia; of which three hundred are Pagans, and come from the market at Gondar; the other two hundred are Chriſtian children, kidnapped by ſome ſuch manner as this we have ſpoken of, and in times of ſcarcity four times that number. The Naybe receives ſix patakas of duty for each one exported. Dixan is in lat. 14° 57′ 55″ North, and long. 40° 7′ 30″ eaſt of the meridian of Greenwich.

From Dixan we diſcovered great part of the province of Tigrê full of high dreadful mountains. We, as yet, had ſeen very little grain, unleſs by the way-ſide from Taranta, and a ſmall flat called Zarai, about four miles S. S. W. of the town.

CHAP. IV.

Journey from Dixan to Adowa, Capital of Tigrè.

IT was on Nov. 25th, at ten in the morning, we left Dixan, deſcending the very ſteep hill on which the town is ſituated. It produces nothing but the Kol-quall tree all around it. We paſſed a miſerable village called Hadhadid, and, at eleven o'clock, encamped under a daroo tree, one of the fineſt I have ſeen in Abyſſinia, being 7½ feet diameter, with a head ſpreading in proportion, ſtanding alone by the ſide of a river which now ran no more, though there is plenty of fine water ſtill ſtagnant in its bed. This tree and river is the boundary of the territory, which the Naybe farms from Tigré, and ſtands within the province of Baharnagaſh, called Midrè Bahar.

Hagi Abdelcader had attended us thus far before he left us; and the noted Saloomè came likewiſe, to ſee if ſome occaſion would offer of doing us further miſchief; but the king's ſervants, now upon their own ground, began to take upon them a proper conſequence. One of them went to meet Saloomé at the bank of the river, and making a mark on the ground with his knife, declared that his patience was quite exhauſted by what he had been witneſs to at Maſuah and Dixan; and if now Saloomé, or any other man belonging to the Naybe, offered to paſs that mark, he would bind him hand and foot, and carry him to a place where he ſhould be left tied to a tree, a prey to the lion and hyæna. They all returned, and there our perſecution from the Naybe ended. But it was very evident, from Achmet's behaviour and diſcourſe, had we gone by Dobarwa, which was the road propoſed by the Naybe, our ſufferings would not have been as yet half finiſhed, unleſs they had ended with our lives.

We remained under this tree the night of the 25th; it will be to me a ſtation ever memorable, as the firſt where I recovered a portion of that tranquillity of mind to which I had been a ſtranger ever ſince my arrival at Maſuah. We had been joined by about twenty loaded aſſes driven by Moors, and two loaded bulls; for there is a ſmall ſort of this kind called Ber, which they make uſe of as beaſts of burden. I called all theſe together to recommend good order to them, deſiring every one to leave me that was not reſolved to obey implicitly the orders I ſhould give them, as to the hours and places of encamping, keeping watch at night, and ſetting out in the morning. I appointed Yaſine the judge of all diſputes between them; and, if the difference ſhould be between Yaſine and any one of them, or, if they ſhould not be content with his deciſion, then my determination was to be final. They all conſented with great marks of approbation. We then repeated the fedtah, and ſwore to ſtand by each other till the laſt, without conſidering who the enemy might be, or what his religion was, if he attacked us.

The 26th, at ſeven in the morning, we left our moſt pleaſant quarters under the daroo-tree, and ſet forward with great alacrity. About a quarter of a mile from the river we croſſed the end of the plain Zarai, already mentioned. Though this is but three miles long, and one where broadeſt, it was the largeſt plain we had ſeen ſince our paſſing Taranta, whoſe top was now covered wholly with large, black, and very heavy clouds, from which we heard and ſaw frequent peals of thunder, and violent ſtreams of lightning. This plain was ſown partly with wheat, partly with Indian corn; the firſt was cut down, the other not yet ripe. Two miles farther we paſſed Addicota, a village planted upon a high rock; the ſides towards us were as if cut perpendicular like a wall. Here was one refuge of the Jeſuits when baniſhed Tigrè by Facilidas, when they fled to the rebel John Akay. We after this paſſed a variety of ſmall villages on each ſide of us, all on the top of hills; Darcotta and Embabuwhat on the right, Azaria on the left.

At half an hour paſt eleven we encamped under a mountain, on the top of which is a village called Hadawi, conſiſting of no more than eighty houſes, though, for the preſent, it is the ſeat of the Baharnagaſh. The preſent Baharnagaſh had bought the little diſtrict that he commanded, after the preſent governor of Tigré, Michael Suhul, had annexed to his own province what he pleaſed of the old domains, and farmed the other part to the Naybe for a larger revenue than he ever could get from any other tenant.

The Naybe had now no longer a naval force to ſupport him, and the fear of Turkiſh conqueſt had ceaſed in Tigrè. The Naybe could be reduced within any bounds that the governor of Tigrè might pleaſe to preſcribe him; and the Baharnagaſh was a ſervant maintained to watch over him, and ſtarve him into obedience, by intercepting his proviſions whenever the governor of Tigré commanded him.

This nobleman paid me a viſit in my tent, and was the firſt Abyſſinian I had ſeen on horſeback; he had ſeven attendant horſemen with him, and about a dozen of others on foot, all of a beggarly appearance, and very ill-armed and equipped. He was a little man, of an olive complexion, or rather darker; his head was ſhaved cloſe, with a cowl, or covering, upon it; he had a pair of ſhort trouſers; his feet and legs were bare; the uſual coarſe girdle was wrapt ſeveral times about him, in which he ſtuck his knife; and the ordinary web of cotton cloth, neither new nor clean, was thrown about him. His parts ſeemed to be much upon the level with his appearance. He aſked me, if I had ever ſeen horſes before? I ſaid, Very ſeldom. He then deſcribed their qualities in ſuch a manner as would never have given me any idea of the animal if I had ſeen it ſeldom. He excuſed himſelf for not having ſent us proviſions, becauſe he had been upon an expedition againſt ſome rebellious villages, and was then only juſt returned.

To judge by his preſent appearance, he was no very reſpectable perſonage; but in this I was miſtaken, as I afterwards found. I gave him a preſent in proportion to the firſt idea, with which he ſeemed very well content, till he obſerved a number of fire-arms tied up to the pillar in the middle of the tent, among which were two large ſhip-blunderbuſſes. He aſked me if there was no danger of their going off? I ſaid, that it happened every now and then, when their time was come. A very little after this, he took the cuſhion upon which he ſat, went out, and placed himſelf at the door of the tent. There the king's ſervant got hold of him, and told him roundly, he muſt furniſh us with a goat, a kid, and forty loaves, and that immediately, and write it off in his deftar, or account-book, if he pleaſed. He then went away and ſent us a goat and fifty cakes of teff bread.

But my views upon him did not end here. His ſeven horſes were all in very bad order, though there was a black one among them that had particularly ſtruck my fancy. In the evening I ſent the king's ſervants, and Janni's, for a check, to try if he would ſell that black horſe. The bargain was immediately made for various pieces of goods, part of which I had with me, and part I procured from my companions in the caravan. Every thing was faſhionable and new from Arabia. The value was about L. 12. Sterling, forty ſhillings more than our friend at Dixan had paid for a whole family of four perſons. The goods were delivered, and the horſe was to be ſent in the evening, when he proved a brown one, old, and wanting an eye. I immediately returned the horſe, inſiſting on the black one; but he proteſted the black horſe was not his own; that he had returned it to its maſter; and, upon a little further diſcourſe, ſaid, that it was a horſe he intended as a preſent for the king.

My friends treated this with great indifference, and deſired their goods back again, which were accordingly delivered. But they were no ſooner in the tent, when the black horſe was ſent, and refuſed. The whole, however, was made up, by ſending us another goat, which I gave to Yaſine, and two jars of bouza, which we drank among us, promiſing, according to the Baharnagaſh's requeſt, we would repreſent him well at court. We found, from his ſervants, that he had been upon no expedition, nor one ſtep from home for three months paſt.

I WAS exceedingly pleaſed with this firſt acquiſition. The horſe was then lean, as he ſtood about ſixteen and a half hands high, of the breed of Dongola. Yaſine, a good horſeman, recommended to me one of his ſervants, or companions, to take care of him. He was an Arab, from the neighbourhood of Medina, a ſuperior horſeman himſelf, and well-verſed in every thing that concerned the animal. I took him immediately into my ſervice. We called the horſe Mirza, a name of good fortune. Indeed, I might ſay, I acquired that day a companion that contributed always to my pleaſure, and more than once to my ſafety; and was no ſlender means of acquiring me the firſt attention of the king. I had brought my Arab ſtirrups, ſaddle, and bridle with me, ſo that I was now as well equipped as a horſeman could be.

ON the 27th we left Hadawi, continuing our journey down a very ſteep and narrow path between two ſtony hills; then aſcended one ſtill higher, upon the top of which ſtands the large village of Goumbubba, whence we have a proſpect over a conſiderable plain all ſown with the different grain this country produces, wheat, barley, teff, and tocuſſo; ſimſim, (or ſeſame) and nook; the laſt is uſed for oil.

We paſſed the village of Dergate, then that of Regticat, on the top of a very high hill on the left, as the other was on our right. We pitched our tent about half a mile off the village called Barranda, where we were overtaken by our friend the Baharnagaſh, who was ſo well pleaſed with our laſt interview, eſpecially the bargain of the horſe, that he ſent us three goats, two jars of honey-wine, and ſome wheat-flour. I invited him to my tent, which he immediately accepted. He was attended by two ſervants on foot, with lances and ſhields; he had no arms himſelf, but, by way of amends, had two drums beating, and two trumpets blowing before him, ſounding a charge.

He ſeemed to be a very ſimple, good-natured man, indeed, remarkably ſo; a character rarely found in any degree of men in this country. He aſked me how I liked my horſe? ſaid, he hoped I did not intend to mount it myſelf? I anſwered, God forbid; I kept him as a curioſity. He commended my prudence very much, and gave me a long detail about what horſes had done, and would do, on occaſions. Some of the people without, however, ſhewed his ſervants my ſaddle, bridle, and ſtirrups, which they well knew, from being neighbours to the Arabs of Sennaar, and praiſed me as a better horſeman by far than any one in that country; this they told to the Baharnagaſh, who, nothing offended, laughed heartily at the pretended ignorance I had ſhewn him, and ſhook me very kindly by the hand, and told me he was really poor, or he would have taken no money from me for the horſe. He ſhewed ſo much good nature, and open honeſt behaviour, that I gave him a preſent better than the firſt, and which was more agreeable, as leſs expected. Razors, knives, ſteels for ſtriking fire, are the moſt valuable preſents in this country, of the hardware kind.

The Baharnagaſh now was in ſuch violent good ſpirits, that he would not go home till he had ſeen a good part of his jar of hydromel finiſhed; and he little knew, at that time, he was in the tent with a man who was to be his chief cuſtomer for horſes hereafter. I ſaw him ſeveral times after at court, and did him ſome ſervices, both with the king and Ras Michael. He had a quality which I then did not know; With all his ſimplicity and buffoonery, no one was braver in his own perſon than he; and, together with his youngeſt ſon, he died afterwards in the king's defence, fighting bravely at the battle of Serbraxos.

At five o'clock this afternoon we had a violent ſhower of hailſtones. Nothing is more common than aggravation about the ſize of hail; but, ſtooping to take up one I thought as large as a nutmeg, I received a blow from another juſt under my eye, which I imagined had blinded me, and which occaſioned a ſwelling all the next day.

I had gained the Baharnagaſh's heart ſo entirely that it was not poſſible to get away the next day. We were upon the very verge of his ſmall dominions, and he had ordered a quantity of wheat-flour to be made for us, which he ſent in the evening, with a kid. For my part, the ſhare I had taken yeſterday of his hydromel had given me ſuch a pain in my head that I ſcarce could raiſe it the whole day.

It was the 29th we left our ſtation at Barranda, and had ſcarcely advanced a mile when we were overtaken by a party of about twenty armed men on horſeback. The Shangalla, the ancient Cuſhites, are all the way on our right hand, and frequently venture incurſions into the flat country that was before us. This was the laſt piece of attention of the Baharnagaſh, who ſent his party to guard us from danger in the plain. It awakened us from our ſecurity; we examined carefully the ſtate of our fire-arms; cleaned and charged them anew, which we had not done ſince the day we left Dixan.

The firſt part of our journey to-day was in a deep gully; and, in half an hour, we entered into a very pleaſant wood of acacia-trees, then in flower. In it likewiſe was a tree, in ſmell like a honeyſuckle, whoſe large white flower nearly reſembles that of a caper. We came out of this wood into the plain, and aſcended two eaſy hills; upon the top of theſe were two huge rocks, in the holes of which, and within a large cave, a number of the blue fork-tailed ſwallows had begun their neſts. Theſe, and probably many, if not all the birds of paſſage, breed twice in the year, which ſeems a proviſion againſt the loſſes made by emigration perfectly conſonant to divine wiſdom. Theſe rocks are, by ſome, ſaid to be the boundaries of the command of the Baharnagaſh on this ſide; though others extend them to the Balezat.

We entered again a ſtraggling wood, ſo overgrown with wild oats that it covered the men and their horſes. The plain here is very wide. It reaches down on the weſt to Serawé, then diſtant about twelve miles. It extends from Goumbubba as far ſouth as Balezat. The ſoil is excellent; but ſuch flat countries are very rare in Abyſſinia. This, which is one of the fineſt and wideſt, is abandoned without culture, and is in a ſtate of waſte. The reaſon of this is, an inveterate feud between the villages here and thoſe of Serawè, ſo that the whole inhabitants on each ſide go armed to plow and to ſow in one day; and it is very ſeldom either of them complete their harveſt without having a battle with their enemies and neighbours.

Before we entered this wood, and, indeed, on the preceding day, from the time we left Hadawi, we had ſeen a very extraordinary bird at a diſtance, reſembling a wild turkey, which ran exceedingly faſt, and appeared in great flocks. It is called Erkoom *, in Amhara; Abba Gumba, in Tigrè; and, towards the frontiers of Sennaar, Tier el Naciba, or, the Bird of Deſtiny.

Our guides aſſembled us all in a body, and warned us that the river before us was the place of the rendezvous of the Serawè horſe, where many caravans had been entirely cut off. The cavalry is the beſt on this ſide of Abyſſinia. They keep up the breed of their horſes by their vicinity to Sennaar whence they get ſupply. Nevertheleſs, they behaved very ill at the battle of Limjour; and I cannot ſay I remember them to have diſtinguiſhed themſelves any where elſe. They were on our right at the battle of Serbraxos, and were beat by the horſe of Foggora and the Galla.

After paſſing the wood, we came to the river, which was then ſtanding in pools. I here, for the firſt time, mounted on horſeback, to the great delight of my companions,

---

* See the article Erkoom in the Appendix.

nions from Barranda, and alſo of our own, none of whom had ever before ſeen a gun fired from a horſe galloping, excepting Yaſine and his ſervant, now my groom, but neither of theſe had ever ſeen a double-barrelled gun. We paſſed the plain with all the diligence conſiſtent with the ſpeed and capacity of our long-eared convoy; and, having now gained the hills, we bade defiance to the Serawè horſe, and ſent our guard back perfectly content, and full of wonder at our fire-arms, declaring that their maſter the Baharnagaſh, had he ſeen the black horſe behave that day, would have given me another much better.

We entered now into a cloſe country covered with bruſhwood, wild oats, and high bent-graſs; in many places rocky and uneven, ſo as ſcarce to leave a narrow part to paſs. Juſt in the very entrance a lion had killed a very fine animal called Agazan. It is of the goat kind; and, excepting a ſmall variety in colour, is preciſely the ſame animal I had ſeen in Barbary near Capſa. It might be about twelve ſtone weight, and of the ſize of a large aſs. (Whenever I mention a ſtone weight, I would wiſh to be underſtood horſeman's weight, fourteen pound to the ſtone, as moſt familiar to the generality of thoſe who read theſe Travels.) The animal was ſcarcely dead; the blood was running; and the noiſe of my gun had probably frightened its conqueror away: every one with their knives cut off a large portion of fleſh; Moors and Chriſtians did the ſame; yet the Abyſſinians averſion to any thing that is dead is ſuch, unleſs killed regularly by the knife, that none of them would lift any bird that was ſhot, unleſs by the point or extreme feather of its wing, Hunger was not the excuſe, for they had been plentifully fed all this journey; ſo that the diſtinction, in this particular caſe, is to be found in the manners of the country. They ſay they may lawfully eat what is killed by the lion, but not by the tiger, hyæna, or any other beaſt. Where they learned this doctrine, I believe, would not be eaſy to anſwer; but it is remarkable, even the Falaſha themſelves admit this diſtinction in favour of the lions.

At noon we croſſed the river Balezat, which riſes at Ade Shiho, a place on the S. W. of the province of Tigrè; and, after no very long courſe, having been once the boundary between Tigrè and Midré Bahar, (for ſo the country of the Baharnagaſh was called) it falls into the Mareb, or ancient Aſtuſaſpes. It was the firſt river, then actually running, that we had ſeen ſince we paſſed Taranta; indeed, all the ſpace is but very indifferently watered. This ſtream is both clear and rapid, and ſeems to be full of fiſh. We continued for ſome time along its banks, the river on our left, and the mountains on our right, through a narrow plain, till we came to Tomumbuſſo, a high pyramidal mountain, on the top of which is a convent of monks, who do not, however, reſide there, but only come hither upon certain feaſts, when they keep open houſe and entertain all that viſit them. The mountain itſelf is of porphyry.

There we encamped by the river's ſide, and were obliged to ſtay this and the following day, for a duty, or cuſtom, to be paid by all paſſengers. Theſe duties are called Awides, which ſignifies *gifts;* though they are levied, for the moſt part, in a very rigorous and rude manner; but they are eſtabliſhed by uſage in particular ſpots; and are, in fact, a regality annexed to the eſtate. Such places are called Ber, *paſſes;* which are often met with in the names of places throughout Abyſſinia, as Dingleber, Sankraber; and ſo forth.

THERE are five of theſe Awides which, like turnpikes, are to be paid at paſſing between Maſuah and Adowa; one at Samhar, the ſecond at Dixan, the third at Darghat, the fourth here at Balezat, and the fifth at Kella. The ſmall village of Sebow was diſtant from us two miles to the eaſt; Zarow the ſame diſtance to the S. S. E. and Noguet, a village before us, were the places of abode of theſe tax-gatherers, who farm it for a ſum from their ſuperior, and divide the profit *pro rata* of the ſums each has advanced. It is much of the ſame nature as the caphar in the Levant, but levied in a much more indiſcreet, arbitrary manner. The farmer of this duty values as he thinks proper what each caravan is to pay; there is no tariff, or reſtraint, upon him. Some have on this account been detained months; and others, in time of trouble or bad news, have been robbed of every thing: this is always the caſe upon the leaſt reſiſtance; for then the villages around you riſe in arms; you are not only ſtript of your property, but ſure to be ill-treated in your perſon.

As I was ſent for by the king, and going to Ras Michael, in whoſe province they were, I affected to laugh when they talked of detaining me; and declared peremptorily to them, that I would leave all my baggage to them with great pleaſure, rather than that the king's life ſhould be in danger by my ſtay. They were now ſtaggered, and ſeemed not prepared for an incident of this kind. As I kept up a high tone, we were quit with being detained a day, by paying five pieces of blue Surat cotton cloth, value ¾ of a pataka each, and one piece of white, value one pataka. Our companions, rather than ſtay behind, made the beſt bargain they could; and we all decamped, and ſet forward together. I was ſurpriſed to ſee, at the ſmall village Zarow, ſeveral families as black as perfect negroes, only they were not woolly-headed, and had prominent features. I aſked if they deſcended from ſlaves, or ſons of ſlaves? They ſaid, No; their particular families of that and the neighbouring village Sebow, were of that colour from time immemorial; and that this did not change, though either the father or mother were of another colour.

On the 1ſt of December we departed from Balezat, and aſcended a ſteep mountain upon which ſtands the village Noguet, which we paſſed about half an hour after. On the top of the hill were a few fields of teff. Harveſt was then ended, and they were treading out the teff with oxen. Having paſſed another very rugged mountain, we deſcended and encamped by the ſide of a ſmall river, called Mai Kol-quall, from a number of theſe trees growing about it. This place is named the Kella, or Caſtle, becauſe, nearly at equal diſtances, the mountains on each ſide run for a conſiderable extent, ſtraight and even, in ſhape like a wall, with gapes at certain diſtances, reſembling embraſures and baſtions. This rock is otherwiſe called Damo, anciently the priſon of the collateral heirs-male of the royal family.

The river Kol-quall riſes in the mountains of Tigrè, and, after a courſe nearly N. W. falls into the Mareb. It was at Kella we ſaw, for the firſt time, the roofs of the houſes made in form of cones; a ſure proof that the tropical rains grow more violent as they proceed weſtward.

About half a mile on the hill above is the village Kaibara, wholly inhabited by Mahometan Gibbertis; that is, native Abyſſinians of that religion. Kella being one of theſe bers, or paſſages, we were detained there three whole days, by the extravagant demands of theſe farmers of the Awide, who laughed at all the importance we gave ourſelves. They had reaſons for our reaſons, menaces for our menaces, but no civilities to anſwer ours. What increaſed the awkwardneſs of our ſituation was, they would take no money for proviſions, but only merchandiſe by way of barter. We were, indeed, prepared for this by information; ſo we began to open ſhop by ſpreading a cloth upon the ground, at the ſight of which, hundreds of young women poured down upon us on every ſide from villages behind the mountains which we could not ſee. The country is ſurpriſingly populous, notwithſtanding the great emigration lately made with Michael. Beads and antimony are the ſtandard in this way-faring commerce; but beads are a dangerous ſpeculation. You loſe ſometimes every thing, or gain more than honeſtly you ſhould do; for all depends upon faſhion; and the fancies of a brown, or black beauty, there, gives the *ton* as deciſively as does the example of the faireſt in England.

To our great diſappointment, the perſon employed to buy our beads at Jidda had not received the laſt liſt of faſhions from this country; ſo he had bought us a quantity beautifully flowered with red and green, and as big as a large pea; alſo ſome large oval, green, and yellow ones; whereas the *ton* now among the beauties of Tigré were ſmall ſky-coloured blue beads, about the ſize of ſmall lead ſhot, or ſeed pearls; blue bugles, and common white bugles, were then in demand, and large yellow glaſs, flat in the ſides like the amber-beads formerly uſed by the better ſort of the old women-peaſants in England. All our beads were then rejected, by ſix or ſeven dozen of the ſhrilleſt tongues I ever heard. They decried our merchandize in ſuch a manner, that I thought they meant to condemn them as unſaleable, to be confiſcated or deſtroyed.

Let every man, travelling in ſuch countries as theſe, remember, that there is no perſon, however mean, who is in his company, that does not merit attention, kindneſs, and complacency. Let no man in travelling exalt himſelf above the loweſt, in a greater degree than he is able to do ſuperior ſervice; for many that have thought themſelves ſafe, and been inattentive to this, have periſhed by the unſuſpected machinations of the loweſt and meaneſt wretch among them. Few have either made ſuch long or ſuch frequent journies of this kind as I, and I ſcarcely recollect any perſon ſo inſignificant that, before the end of a moderate journey, had not it in his power to return you like for like for your charity or unkindneſs, be the difference of your quality and condition what it would.

Of all the men in our company, none had any ſtock of the true ſmall ſky-blue beads, and no one had one grain of the large yellow-glaſs ones, but the poor Moor, whoſe aſs was bit by the hyæna near Lila, and whoſe cargo, likely to be left behind at the foot of Taranta, I had diſtributed among the reſt of the aſſes of the caravan; and, leaving the wounded one for the price he would fetch, had next day bought him another at Halai, with which, ſince that time, he continued his journey. That fellow had felt the obligation in ſilence; and not one word, but Good-day, and Good-e'en, ſen, had paſſed between us ſince conferring the favour. Underſtanding now what was the matter, he called Yaſine, and gave him a large package, which he imprudently opened, in which was a treaſure of all the beads in faſhion, all but the white and blue bugles, and theſe Yaſine himſelf furniſhed us with afterwards.

A GREAT ſhout was ſet up by the women-purchaſers, and a violent ſcramble followed. Twenty or thirty threw themſelves upon the parcel, tearing and breaking all the ſtrings as if they intended to plunder us. This joke did not ſeem to be reliſhed by the ſervants. Their hard-heartedneſs before, in profeſſing they would let us ſtarve rather than give us a handful of flour for all our unfaſhionable beads, had quite extinguiſhed the regard we elſe would have unavoidably ſhewn to the fair ſex. A dozen of whips and ſticks were laid unmercifully upon their hands and arms, till each dropped her booty. The Abyſſinian men that came with them ſeemed to be perfectly unconcerned at the fray, and ſtood laughing without the leaſt ſign of wiſhing to interfere in favour of either ſide. I believe the reſtitution would not have been complete, had not Yaſine, who knew the country well, fired one of the ſhip-blunderbuſſes into the air behind their backs. At hearing ſo unexpectedly this dreadful noiſe, both men and women fell flat on their faces; the women were immediately dragged off the cloth, and I do not believe there was ſtrength left in any hand to graſp or carry away a ſingle bead. My men immediately wrapped the whole in the cloth, ſo for a time our market ended.

FOR my part, at the firſt appearance of the combat I had withdrawn myſelf, and ſat a quiet ſpectator under a tree.

Some of the women were really ſo diſordered with the fright, that they made but very feeble efforts in the market afterwards. The reſt beſeeched me to transfer the market to the carpet I ſat on under the tree. This I conſented to; but, growing wiſe by misfortune, my ſervants now produced ſmall quantities of every thing, and not without a very ſharp conteſt and diſpute, ſomewhat ſuperior in noiſe to that of our fiſh-women. We were, however, plentifully ſupplied with honey, butter, flour, and pumpkins of an exceeding good taſte, ſcarcely inferior to melons.

Our caravan being fully victualled the firſt and ſecond day, our market was not opened but by private adventurers, and ſeemingly ſavoured more of gallantry than gain. There were three of them the moſt diſtinguiſhed for beauty and for tongue, who, by their diſcourſe, had entertained me greatly. I made each of them a preſent of a few beads, and aſked them how many kiſſes they would give for each? They anſwered very readily, with one accord, "Poh! we don't ſell kiſſes in this country: Who would buy them? We will give you as many as you wiſh for nothing." And there was no appearance but, in that bargain, they meant to be very fair and liberal dealers.

The men ſeemed to have no talent for marketing; nor do they in this country either buy or ſell. But we were ſurpriſed to ſee the beaux among them come down to the tent, the ſecond day after our arrival, with each of them a ſingle ſtring of thin, white bugles tied about their dirty, black legs, a little above their ancle; and of this they ſeemed as proud as if the ornament had been gold or jewels.

I EASILY ſaw that ſo much poverty, joined to ſo much avarice and pride, made the poſſeſſor a proper ſubject to be employed. My young favourite, who had made ſo frank an offer of her kindneſs, had brought me her brother, begging that I would take him with me to Gondar to Ras Michael, and allow him to carry one of my guns, no doubt with an intention to run off with it by the way. I told her that was a thing eaſily done; but I muſt firſt have a trial of his fidelity, which was this, That he would, without ſpeaking to anybody but me and her, go ſtraight to Janni at Adowa, and carry the letter I ſhould give him, and deliver it into his own hand, in which caſe I would give him a large parcel of each of theſe beads, more than ever ſhe thought to poſſeſs in her lifetime. She frankly agreed, that my word was more to be relied upon than either her own or her brother's; and, therefore, that the beads, once ſhewn to them both, were to remain a depoſit in my hand. However, not to ſend him away wholly deſtitute of the power of charming, I preſented him the ſingle ſtring of white bugles for his ancle. Janni's Greek ſervant gave him a letter, and he made ſuch diligence that, on the fourth day, by eight o'clock in the morning, he came to my tent without ever having been miſſed at home.

AT the ſame time came an officer from Janni, with a violent mandate, in the name of Ras Michael, declaring to the perſon that was the cauſe of our detention, That, was it not for ancient friendſhip, the preſent meſſenger ſhould have carried him to Ras Michael in irons; diſcharging me from all awides; ordering him, as Shum of the place, to furniſh me with proviſions; and, in regard to the time he had cauſed us to loſe, fixing the awides of the whole caravan at eight piaſters, not the twentieth part of what he would have exacted. One reaſon of this ſeverity was, that, while I was in Maſuah, Janni had entertained this man at his own houſe; and, knowing the uſual vexations the caravans met with at Kella, and the long time they were detained there at conſiderable expence, had obtained a promiſe from the Shum, in conſideration of favours done him, that he ſhould let us paſs freely, and, not only ſo, but ſhould ſhew us ſome little civility. This promiſe, now broken, was one of the articles of delinquency for which he was puniſhed.

Cohol, large needles, goats ſkins, coarſe ſciſſars, razors, and ſteels for ſtriking fire, are the articles of barter at Kella. An ordinary goat's ſkin is worth a quart of wheat-flour. As we expected an order of deliverance, all was ready upon its arrival. The Moors with their aſſes, grateful for the benefit received, began to bleſs the moment they joined us; hoping, in my conſideration, upon our arrival at the cuſtomhouſe of Adowa, they might meet with further favour.

Yasine, in the four days we had ſtaid at Kella, had told me his whole hiſtory. It ſeems he had been ſettled in a province of Abyſſinia, near to Sennaar, called Ras el Feel; had married Abd el Jilleel, the Shekh's daughter; but, growing more popular than his father-in-law, he had been perſecuted by him, and obliged to leave the country. He began now to form hopes, that, if I was well received, as he ſaw, in all appearance, I was to be, he might, by my intereſt, be appointed to his father-in-law's place; eſpecially if there was war, as every thing ſeemed to indicate. Abd el Jilleel was a coward, and incapable of making himſelf of perſonal valued to any party. On the contrary, Yaſine was a tried man, an excellent horſeman, ſtrong, active, and of known courage, having been twice with the late king Yaſous in his invaſions of Sennaar, and both times much wounded there. It was impoſſible to diſpute his title to preferment; but I had not formed that idea of my own ſucceſs that I ſhould be able to be of any uſe or aſſiſtance to him in it. Kella is in lat. 14° 24′ 34″ North.

It was in the afternoon of the 4th that we ſet out from Kella; our road was between two hills covered with thick wood. On our right was a cliff, or high rock of granite, on the top of which were a few houſes that ſeemed to hang over the cliff rather than ſtand upon it. A few minutes after three o'clock we paſſed a rivulet, and a quarter of an hour afterwards another, both which run into the Mareb. We ſtill continued to deſcend, ſurrounded on all ſides with mountains covered with high graſs and bruſhwood, and abounding with lions. At four, we arrived at the foot of the mountain, and paſſed a ſmall ſtream which runs there.

We had ſeen no villages after leaving Kella. At half paſt four o'clock we came to a conſiderable river called Angueah, which we croſſed, and pitched our tent on the farther ſide of it. It was about fifty feet broad and three in depth. It was perfectly clear, and ran rapidly over a bed of white pebbles, and was the largeſt river we had yet ſeen in Habeſh. In ſummer there is very little plain ground near it but what is occupied by the ſtream; it is full of ſmall fiſh, in great repute for their goodneſs.

THIS river has its name from a beautiful tree, which covers both its banks. This tree, by the colour of its bark and richneſs of its flower, is a great ornament to the banks of the river. A variety of other flowers fill the whole level plain between the mountain and the river, and even ſome way up the mountains. In particular, great variety of jeſſamin, white, yellow, and party-coloured. The country ſeemed now to put on a more favourable aſpect; the air was much freſher, and more pleaſant, every ſtep we advanced after leaving Dixan; and one cauſe was very evident; the country where we now paſſed was well-watered with clear running ſtreams; whereas, nearer Dixan, there were few, and all ſtagnant.

THE 5th, we deſcended a ſmall mountain for about twenty minutes, and paſſed the following villages, Zabangella, about a mile N. W.; at a quarter of an hour after, Moloxito, half a mile further S. E.; and Manſuetemen, three quarters of a mile E. S. E. Theſe villages are all the property of the Abuna; who has alſo a duty upon all merchandiſe paſſing there; but Ras Michael had confiſcated theſe laſt villages on account of a quarrel he had with the laſt Abuna, *Aſ-Yagoube*.

WE now began firſt to ſee the high mountains of Adowa, nothing reſembling in ſhape to thoſe of Europe, nor, indeed, any other country. Their ſides were all perpendicular rocks, high like ſteeples, or obeliſks, and broken into a thouſand different forms.

AT half paſt eight o'clock we left the deep valley, wherein runs the Mareb W. N. W.; at the diſtance of about nine miles above it is the mountain, or high hill, on which ſtands Zarai, now a collection of villages, formerly two convents built by Lalibala; though the monks tell you a ſtory of the queen of Saba reſiding there, which the reader may be perfectly ſatisfied ſhe never did in her life.

The Mareb is the boundary between Tigré and the Baharnagaſh, on this ſide. It runs over a bed of ſoil; is large, deep, and ſmooth; but, upon rain falling, it is more dangerous to paſs than any river in Abyſſinia, on account of the frequent holes in its bottom. We then entered the narrow plain of Yeeha, wherein runs the ſmall river, which either gives its name to, or takes it from it. The Yeeha riſes from many ſources in the mountains to the weſt; it is neither conſiderable for ſize nor its courſe, and is ſwallowed up in the Mareb.

The harveſt was in great forwardneſs in this place. The wheat was cut, and a conſiderable ſhare of the teff in another part; they were treading out this laſt-mentioned grain with oxen. The Dora, and a ſmall grain called telba, (of which they make oil) was not ripe.

At eleven o'clock we reſted by the ſide of the mountain whence the river falls. All the villages that had been built here bore the marks of the juſtice of the governor of Tigré. They had been long the moſt incorrigible banditti in the province. He ſurrounded them in one night, burnt their houſes, and extirpated the inhabitants; and would never ſuffer any one ſince to ſettle there. At three o'clock in the afternoon we aſcended what remained of the mountain of Yeeha; came to the plain upon its top; and, at a quarter before four, paſſed the village of that name, leaving it to the S. E. and began the moſt rugged and dangerous deſcent we had met with ſince Taranta.

At half paſt five in the evening we pitched our tent at the foot of the hill, cloſe by a ſmall, but rapid and clear ſtream, which is called Ribieraini. This name was given it by the banditti of the villages before mentioned, becauſe from this you ſee two roads; one leading from Gondar, that is, from the weſtward; the other from the Red Sea to the eaſtward. One of the gang that uſed to be upon the outlook from this ſtation, as ſoon as any caravan came in ſight, cried out, Ribieraini, which in Tigrè ſignifies *they are coming this way*; upon which notice every one took his lance and ſhield, and ſtationed himſelf properly to fall with advantage upon the unwary merchant; and it was a current report, which his preſent greatneſs could not ſtifle, that, in his younger days, Ras Michael himſelf frequently was on theſe expeditions at this place. On our right was the high, ſteep, and rugged mountain of Samayat, which the ſame Michael, being in rebellion, choſe for his place of ſtrength, and was there beſieged and taken priſoner by the late king Yaſous.

The rivulet of Ribieraini is the ſource of the fertility of the country adjoining, as it is made to overflow every part of this plain, and furniſhes a perpetual ſtore of graſs, which is the reaſon of the caravans chuſing to ſtop here. Two or three harveſts are alſo obtained by means of this river; for, provided there is water, they ſow in Abyſſinia in all ſeaſons. We perceived that we were now approaching ſome conſiderable town, by the great care with which every ſmall piece of ground, and even the ſteep ſides of the mountains, were cultivated, though they had ever ſo little ſoil.

On Wedneſday the 6th of December, at eight o'clock in the morning, we ſet out from Ribieraini; and in about three hours travelling on a very pleaſant road, over eaſy hills and through hedge-rows of jeſſamin, honey-ſuckle, and many kinds of flowering ſhrubs we arrived at Adowa, where once reſided Michael Suhul, governor of Tigrè. It was this day we ſaw, for the firſt time, the ſmall, long-tailed green paroquet, from the hill of Shillodee, where, as I have already mentioned, we firſt came in ſight of the mountains of Adowa.

CHAP. V.

Arrive at Adowa—Reception there—Viſit Fremona and Ruins of Axum—Arrive at Siré.

ADOWA is ſituated on the declivity of a hill, on the weſt ſide of a ſmall plain ſurrounded everywhere by mountains. Its ſituation accounts for its name, which ſignifies *paſs*, or *paſſage*, being placed on the flat ground immediately below Ribieraini; the paſs through which every body muſt go in their way from Gondar to the Red Sea.

THIS plain is watered by three rivulets which are never dry in the midſt of ſummer; the Aſſa, which we croſs juſt below the town when coming from the eaſtward; the Mai Gogua, which runs below the hill whereon ſtands the village of the ſame name formerly, though now it is called Fremona, from the monaſtery of the Jeſuits built there; and the Ribieraini, which, joining with the other two, falls into the river Mareb, about 22 miles below Adowa. There are fiſh in theſe three ſtreams, but none of them remarkable for their ſize, quantity, or goodneſs. The beſt are thoſe of Mai Gogua, a clear and pleaſant rivulet, running very violently and with great noiſe. This circumſtance, and ignorance of the language, has miſled the reverend father Jerome, who ſays, that the water of Mai Gogua is called ſo from the noiſe that it makes, which, in common language, is called *guggling*. This is a miſtake, for Mai Gogua ſignifies *the river of owls*.

There are many agreeable ſpots to the ſouth-eaſt of the convent, on the banks of this river, which are thick-ſhaded with wood and buſhes. Adowa conſiſts of about 300 houſes, and occupies a much larger ſpace than would be thought neceſſary for theſe to ſtand on, by reaſon that each houſe has an incloſure round it of hedges and trees; the laſt chiefly the wanzey. The number of theſe trees ſo planted in all the towns, ſcreen them ſo, that, at a diſtance, they appear ſo many woods. Adowa was not formerly the capital of Tigré, but has accidentally become ſo upon the acceſſion of this governor, whoſe property, or paternal eſtate, lay in and about it. His manſion-houſe is not diſtinguiſhed from any of the others in the town unleſs by its ſize; it is ſituated upon the top of the hill. The perſon who is Michael's deputy, in his abſence, lives in it. It reſembles a priſon rather than a palace; for there are in and about it above three hundred perſons in irons, ſome of whom have been there for twenty years, moſtly with a view to extort money from them; and, what is the moſt unhappy, even when they have paid the ſum of money which he aſks, do not get their deliverance from his merciless hands; moſt of them are kept in cages like wild beaſts, and treated every way in the ſame manner.

But what deſervedly intereſted us moſt was, the appearance of our kind and hoſpitable landlord, Janni. He had ſent ſervants to conduct us from the paſſage of the river, and met us himſelf at the outer-door of his houſe. I do not remember to have ſeen a more reſpectable figure. He had his own ſhort white hair, covered with a thin muſlin turban, a thick well-ſhaped beard, as white as ſnow, down to his waiſt. He was clothed in the Abyſſinian dreſs, all of white cotton, only he had a red ſilk ſaſh, embroidered with gold, about his waiſt, and ſandals on his feet; his upper garment reached down to his ancles. He had a number of ſervants and ſlaves about him of both ſexes; and, when I approached him, ſeemed diſpoſed to receive me with marks of humility and inferiority, which mortified me much, conſidering the obligations I was under to him, the trouble I had given, and was unavoidably ſtill to give him. I embraced him with great acknowledgments of kindneſs and gratitude, calling him father; a title I always uſed in ſpeaking either to him or of him afterwards, when I was in higher fortune, which he conſtantly remembered with great pleaſure.

He conducted us through a court yard planted with jeſſamin, to a very neat, and, at the ſame, time, large room, furniſhed with a ſilk ſofa; the floor was covered with Perſian carpets and cuſhions. All round, flowers and green leaves were ſtrewed upon the outer yard; and the windows and ſides of the room ſtuck full of evergreens, in commemoration of the Chriſtmas feſtival that was at hand. I ſtopt at the entrance of this room; my feet were both dirty and bloody; and it is not good-breeding to ſhow or ſpeak of your feet in Abyſſinia, eſpecially if any thing ails them, and, at all times, they are covered. He immediately perceived the wounds that were upon mine. Both our cloaths and fleſh were torn to pieces at Taranta, and ſeveral other places; but he thought we had come on mules furniſhed us by the Naybe. For the young man I had ſent to him from Kella, following the genius of his countrymen, tho' telling truth was juſt as profitable to him as lying, had choſen the latter, and ſeeing the horſe I had got from the Baharnagaſh, had figured in his own imagination, a multitude of others, and told Janni that there were with me horſes, aſſes, and mules in great plenty; ſo that when Janni ſaw us paſſing the water, he took me for a ſervant, and expected, for ſeveral minutes, to ſee the ſplendid company arrive, well mounted upon horſes and mules capariſoned.

He was ſo ſhocked at my ſaying that I performed this terrible journey on foot, that he burſt into tears, uttering a thouſand reproaches againſt the Naybe for his hard heartedneſs and ingratitude, as he had twice, as he ſaid, hindered Michael from going in perſon and ſweeping the Naybe from the face of the earth. Water was immediately procured to waſh our feet. And here began another contention, Janni inſiſted upon doing this himſelf; which made me run out into the yard, and declare I would not ſuffer it. After this, the like diſpute took place among the ſervants. It was always a ceremony in Abyſſinia, to waſh the feet of thoſe that come from Cairo, and who are underſtood to have been pilgrims at Jeruſalem.

This was no ſooner finiſhed, than a great dinner was brought, exceedingly well dreſſed. But no conſideration or intreaty could prevail upon my kind landlord to ſit down and partake with me. He would ſtand, all the time, with a clean towel in his hand, though he had plenty of ſervants; and afterwards dined with ſome viſitors, who had come out of curioſity, to ſee a man arrived from ſo far. Among theſe was a number of prieſts; a part of the company which I liked leaſt, but who did not ſhew any hoſtile appearance. It was long before I cured my kind landlord of theſe reſpectful obſervances, which troubled me very much; nor could he wholly ever get rid of them, his own kindneſs and good heart, as well as the pointed and particular orders of the Greek patriarch, Mark, conſtantly ſuggeſting the ſame attention.

In the afternoon, I had a viſit from the governor, a very graceful man, of about ſixty years of age, tall and well favoured. He had juſt then returned from an expedition to the Tacazzè, againſt ſome villages of Ayto Tesfos *, which he had deſtroyed, ſlain 120 men, and driven off a number of cattle. He had with him about ſixty muſquets, to which, I underſtood, he had owed his advantage. Theſe villages were about Tubalaque, juſt as you aſcend the farther bank of the Tacazzé. He ſaid he doubted much if we ſhould be allowed to paſs through Woggora, unleſs ſome favourable news came from Michael; for Tesfos of Samen, who kept his government after Joas's death, and refuſed to acknowledge Michael, or to ſubmit to the king, in conjunction with the people of Woggora, acted now the part of robbers, plundering all ſorts of people, that carried either proviſions, or

---

* A rebel governor of Samen, of which I ſhall after have occaſion to ſpeak.

or any thing elſe, to Gondar, in order to diſtreſs the king and Michael's Tigré ſoldiers, who were then there.

The church of Mariam is on the hill S. S. W. of the town, and eaſt of Adowa; on the other ſide of the river, is the other church, called Kedus Michael. About nine miles north, a little inclined to the eaſt, is Bet Abba Garima, one of the moſt celebrated monaſteries in Abyſſinia. It was once a reſidence of one of their kings; and it is ſuppoſed that, from this circumſtance ill underſtood, former travellers *, have ſaid the metropolis of Abyſſinia was called Germè.

Adowa is the ſeat of a very valuable manufacture of coarſe cotton cloth, which circulates all over Abyſſinia inſtead of ſilver money; each web is ſixteen peek long of 1¾ width, their value a pataka; that is, ten for the ounce of gold. The houſes of Adowa are all of rough ſtone, cemented with mud inſtead of morter. That of lime is not uſed but at Gondar, where it is very bad. The roofs are in the form of cones, and thatched with a reedy ſort of graſs, ſomething thicker than wheat ſtraw. The Falaſha, or Jews, enjoy this profeſſion of thatching excluſively; they begin at the bottom, and finiſh at the top.

Excepting a few ſpots taken notice of as we came along from Ribieraini to Adowa, this was the only part of Tigrè where there was ſoil ſufficient to yield corn; the whole of the province beſides is one entire rock. There are no timber trees in this part of Tigrê unleſs a daroo or two in the valleys, and wanzeys in towns about the houſes.

---

* Gol. p. 22. proem.

At Adowa, and all the neighbourhood, they have three harveſts annually. Their firſt ſeed time is in July and Auguſt; it is the principal one for wheat, which they then ſow in the middle of the rains. In the ſame ſeaſon they ſow tocuſſo, teff, and barley. From the 20th of November they reap firſt their barley, then their wheat, and laſt of all their teff. In room of theſe they ſow immediately upon the ſame ground, without any manure, barley, which they reap in February; and then often ſow teff, but more frequently a kind of veitch, or pea, called Shimbra; theſe are cut down before the firſt rains, which are in April. With all theſe advantages of triple harveſts, which coſt no fallowing, weeding, manure, or other expenſive proceſſes, the farmer in Abyſſinia is always poor and miſerable.

In Tigré it is a good harveſt that produces nine after one; it ſcarcely ever is known to produce ten; or more than three after one, for peas. The land, as in Egypt, is ſet to the higheſt bidder yearly; and like Egypt it receives an additional value, depending on the quantity of rain that falls and its ſituation more or leſs favourable for leading water to it. The landlord furniſhes the ſeed under condition to receive half the produce; but I am told he is a very indulgent maſter that does not take another quarter for the riſk he has run; ſo that the quantity that comes to the ſhare of the huſbandman is not more than ſufficient to afford ſuſtenance for his wretched family.

The ſoil is white clay, mixed with ſand, and has as good appearance as any I have ſeen. I apprehend a deficiency of the crop is not from the barrenneſs of the ſoil, but from the immenſe quantity of field-rats and mice that over-run the whole country, and live in the fiſſures of the earth. To kill theſe, they ſet fire to their ſtraw, the only uſe they make of it.

THE cattle roam at diſcretion through the mountains. The herdſmen ſet fire to the graſs, bent, and bruſhwood, before the rains, and an amazing verdure immediately follows. As the mountains are very ſteep and broken, goats are chiefly the flocks that graze upon them.

THE province of Tigré is all mountainous; and it has been ſaid, without any foundation in truth, that the Pyrenees, Alps, and Apennines, are but mole-hills compared to them. I believe, however, that one of the Pyrenees above St John Pied de Port, is much higher than Lamalmon; and that the mountain of St Bernard, one of the Alps, is full as high as Taranta, or rather higher. It is not the extreme height of the mountains in Abyſſinia that occaſions surpriſe, but the number of them, and the extraordinary forms they preſent to the eye. Some of them are flat, thin, and ſquare, in ſhape of a hearth-ſtone, or ſlab, that ſcarce would ſeem to have baſe ſufficient to reſiſt the action of the winds. Some are like pyramids, others like obeliſks or priſms, and ſome, the moſt extraordinary of all the reſt, pyramids pitched upon their points, with their baſe uppermoſt, which, if it was poſſible, as it is not, they could have been ſo formed in the beginning, would be ſtrong objections to our received ideas of gravity.

THEY tan hides to great perfection in Tigré, but for one purpoſe only. They take off the hair with the juice of two plants, a ſpecies of ſolanum, and the juice of the kol-quall;

both theſe are produced in abundance in the province. They are great novices, however, in dyeing; the plant called Suf produces the only colour they have, which is yellow. In order to obtain a blue, to weave as a border to their cotton clothes, they unravel the blue threads of the Marowt, or blue cloth of Surat, and then weave them again with the thread which they have dyed with the ſuf.

It was on the 10th of January 1770 I viſited the remains of the Jeſuits convent of Fremona. It is built upon the even ridge of a very high hill, in the middle of a large plain, on the oppoſite ſide of which ſtands Adowa. It riſes from the eaſt to the weſt, and ends in a precipice on the eaſt; it is alſo very ſteep to the north, and ſlopes gently down to the plain on the ſouth. The convent is about a mile in circumference, built ſubſtantially with ſtones, which are cemented with lime-morter. It has towers in the flanks and angles; and, notwithſtanding the ill-uſage it has ſuffered, the walls remain ſtill entire to the height of twenty-five feet. It is divided into three, by croſs walls of equal height. The firſt diviſion ſeems to have been deſtined for the convent, the middle for the church, and the third diviſion is ſeparated from this by a wall, and ſtands upon a precipice. It ſeems to me as if it was deſigned for a place of arms. All the walls have holes for muſkets, and, even now, it is by far the moſt defenſible place in Abyſſinia. It reſembles an ancient caſtle much more than a convent.

I can ſcarce conceive the reaſon why theſe reverend fathers miſrepreſent and miſplace this intended capital of Catholic Abyſſinia. Jerome Lobo calls this convent a collection of miſerable villages. Others place it fifty miles, when it is but two, from Adowa to the north-eaſt. Others ſay it is only five miles from the Red Sea, while it is an hundred. It is very extraordinary, that theſe errors ſhould occur in the ſituation of a place built by their own hands, and where their body long had its reſidence; and, what makes it more extraordinary ſtill, it was the domicil which they firſt occupied, and quitted laſt.

The kindneſs, hoſpitality, and fatherly care of Janni never ceaſed a moment. He had already repreſented me in the moſt favourable light to the Iteghè, or queen-mother, (whoſe ſervant he had long been) to her daughter Ozoro Eſther, and Ozoro Altaſh; and, above all, to Michael, with whom his influence was very great; and, indeed, to every body he had any weight with; his own countrymen, Greeks, Abyſſinians, and Mahometans; and, as we found afterwards, he had raiſed their curioſity to a great pitch.

A kind of calm had ſpread itſelf univerſally over the country, without apparent reaſon, as it has been in general obſerved to do immediately before a ſtorm. The minds of men had been wearied rather than amuſed, by a conſtant ſeries of new things, none of which had been foreſeen, and which generally ended in a manner little expected. Tired of gueſſing, all parties ſeemed to agree to give it over, till the ſucceſs of the campaign ſhould afford them ſurer grounds to go upon. Nobody loved Michael, but nobody neglected their own ſafety ſo much as to do or ſay any thing againſt him, till he either ſhould loſe or eſtabliſh his good fortune, by the gain or loſs of a battle with Faſil.

THIS calm I reſolved to take advantage of, and to ſet out immediately for Gondar. But the 17th of January was now at hand, on which the Abyſſinians celebrate the feaſt of the Epiphany with extraordinary rejoicings, and as extraordinary ceremonies, if we believe what their enemies have ſaid about their yearly repetition of baptiſm. This I was reſolved to verify with my own eyes; and as Alvarez, chaplain to the embaſſy from Don Emanuel, king of Portugal, to king David III. ſays he was likewiſe preſent at it, the public will judge between two eye-witneſſes which is likelieſt to be true, when I come to give an account of the religious rites of this people. Adowa is in lat. 14° 7′ 57″ north.

ON the 17th, we ſet out from Adowa, reſuming our journey to Gondar; and, after paſſing two ſmall villages Adega Net, and Adega Daid, the firſt about half a mile on our left, the ſecond about three miles diſtant on our right, we decamped at ſun ſet near a place called Bet Hannes, in a narrow valley, at the foot of two hills, by the ſide of a ſmall ſtream.

ON the 18th, in the morning, we aſcended one of theſe hills, through a very rough ſtony road, and again came into the plain, wherein ſtood Axum, once the capital of Abyſſinia, at leaſt as it is ſuppoſed. For my part, I believe it to have been the magnificent metropolis of the trading people, or Troglodyte Ethiopians called properly Cuſhites, for the reaſon I have already given, as the Abyſſinians never built any city, nor do the ruins of any exiſt at this day in the whole country. But the black, or Troglodyte part of it, called in the language of ſcripture Cuſh, in many places have buildings of great ſtrength, magnitude, and expence, eſpecially at Azab, worthy the magnificence and riches of a ſtate, which was from the firſt ages the emporium of the Indian and African trade, whoſe ſovereign, though a Pagan, was thought an example of reproof to the nations, and choſen as an inſtrument to contribute materially to the building of the firſt temple which man erected to the true God.

The ruins of Axum are very extenſive; but, like the cities of ancient times, conſiſt altogether of public buildings. In one ſquare, which I apprehend to have been the center of the town, there are forty obeliſks, none of which have any hieroglyphics upon them*. There is one larger than the reſt ſtill ſtanding, but there are two ſtill larger than this fallen. They are all of one piece of granite; and on the top of that which is ſtanding there is a patera exceedingly well carved in the Greek taſte. Below, there is the door-bolt and lock, which Poncet ſpeaks of, carved on the obeliſk, as if to repreſent an entrance through it to ſome building behind. The lock and bolt are preciſely the ſame as thoſe uſed at this day in Egypt and Paleſtine, but were never ſeen, as far as I know, in Ethiopia, or at any time in uſe there.

I apprehend this obeliſk, and the two larger that are fallen, to be the works of Ptolemy Evergetes. There is a great deal of carving upon the face of the obeliſk in a Gothic

---

* Poncet ſays that theſe obeliſks are covered with hieroglyphics; but in this he is wrong; he has miſtaken the carving, I ſhall directly mention, for hieroglyphics. London edit. 12mo. 1709, p. 106.

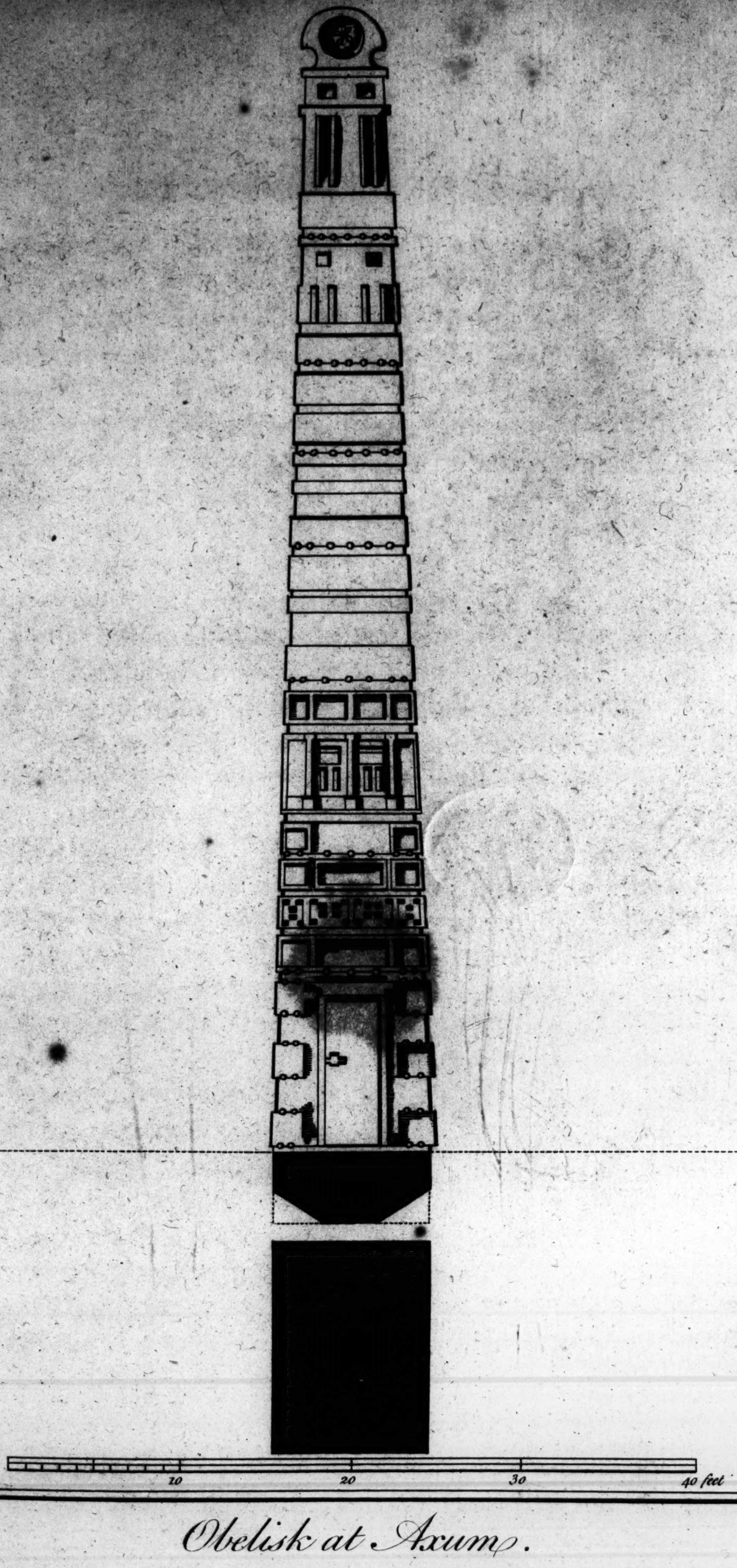
thic taſte, ſomething like metopes, triglyphs, and guttæ, diſpoſed rudely, and without order, but there are no characters or figures. The face of this pyramid looks due ſouth; has been placed with great exactneſs, and preſerves its perpendicular poſition till this day. As this obeliſk has been otherwiſe deſcribed as to its ornaments, I have given a geometrical elevation of it ſervilely copied, without ſhading or perſpective, that all kind of readers may underſtand it.

After paſſing the convent of Abba Pantaleon, called in Abyſſinia, Manſilles, and the ſmall obeliſk ſituated on a rock above, we proceed ſouth by a road cut in a mountain of red marble, having on the left a parapet-wall about five feet high, ſolid, and of the ſame materials. At equal diſtances there are hewn in this wall ſolid pedeſtals, upon the tops of which we ſee the marks where ſtood the Coloſſal ſtatues of Syrius the Latrator Anubis, or Dog Star. One hundred and thirty-three of theſe pedeſtals, with the marks of the ſtatues I juſt mentioned, are ſtill in their places; but only two figures of the dog remained when I was there, much mutilated, but of a taſte eaſily diſtinguiſhed to be Egyptian. Theſe are compoſed of granite, but ſome of them appear to have been of metal. Axum, being the capital of Siris, or Sirè, from this we eaſily ſee what connection this capital of the province had with the dog-ſtar, and conſequently the abſurdity of ſuppoſing that the river derived its name from a Hebrew word*, ſignifying *black*.

There

---

* Shihor.


10
20
30
40 feet

Obelisk at Axum.

London Publiſh'd Dec.r 1st 1789. by G. Robinson & Co.

GR III
BRITISH MUSEUM

THERE are likewiſe pedeſtals, whereon the figures of the Sphinx have been placed. Two magnificent flights of ſteps, ſeveral hundred feet long, all of granite, exceedingly well-faſhioned, and ſtill in their places, are the only remains of a magnificent temple. In the angle of this platform where that temple ſtood, is the preſent ſmall church of Axum, in the place of a former one deſtroyed by Mahomet Gragné, in the reign of king David III.; and which was probably remains of a temple built by Ptolemy Evergetes, if not the work of times more remote.

THE church is a mean, ſmall building, very ill kept, and full of pigeons dung. In it are ſuppoſed to be preſerved the ark of the covenant, and copy of the law which Menilek ſon of Solomon is ſaid, in their fabulous legends, to have ſtolen from his father Solomon in his return to Ethiopia, and theſe were reckoned as it were the palladia of this country. Some ancient copy of the Old Teſtament, I do believe, was depoſited here, probably that from which the firſt verſion was made. But whatever this might be, it was deſtroyed, with the church itſelf, by Mahomet Gragné, though pretended falſely to ſubſiſt there ſtill. This I had from the king himſelf.

THERE was another relique of great importance that happened to eſcape from being burnt, by having, in time, been transferred to a church in one of the iſlands in the lake Tzana, called Selé Quarat Raſou. It is a picture of Chriſt's head crowned with thorns, ſaid to be painted by St Luke, which, upon occaſions of the utmoſt importance, is brought out and carried with the army, eſpecially in a war with Mahometans and Pagans. We have juſt ſeen, it was taken, upon Yaſous's defeat at Sennaar, and reſtored afterwards upon an embaſſy ſent thither on purpoſe, no doubt, for a valuable conſideration.

WITHIN the outer gate of the church, below the ſteps, are three ſmall ſquare incloſures, all of granite, with ſmall octagon pillars in the angles, apparently Egyptian; on the top of which formerly were ſmall images of the dog-ſtar, probably of metal. Upon a ſtone, in the middle of one of theſe, the king ſits, and is crowned, and always has been ſince the days of Paganiſm; and below it, where he naturally places his feet, is a large oblong ſlab like a hearth, which is not of granite, but of free ſtone. The inſcription, though much defaced, may ſafely be reſtored.

ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ

PONCET has miſtaken this laſt word for Baſilius; but he did not pretend to be a ſcholar, and was ignorant of the hiſtory of this country.

AXUM is watered by a ſmall ſtream, which flows all the year from a fountain in the narrow valley, where ſtand the rows of obeliſks. The ſpring is received into a magnificent baſon of 150 feet ſquare, and thence it is carried, at pleaſure, to water the neighbouring gardens, where there is little fruit, excepting pomegranates, neither are theſe very excellent.

THE preſent town of Axum ſtands at the foot of the hill, and may have about ſix hundred houſes. There are ſeveral manufactures of coarſe cotton cloth; and here too the beſt parchment is made of goats ſkins, which is the ordinary employment of the monks. Every thing ſeemed later at Axum, and near it, than at Adowa; the teff was ſtanding yet green.

On the 19th of January, by a meridian altitude of the ſun, and a mean of ſeveral altitudes of ſtars by night, I found the latitude of Axum to be 14° 6′ 36″ north.

The reader will have obſerved, that I have taken great pains in correcting the geography of this country, and illuſtrating the accounts given us by travellers, as well ancient as modern, and reconciling them to each other. There are, however, in a very late publication, what I muſt ſuppoſe to be errors, at leaſt they are abſolutely unintelligible to me, whether they are to be placed to the account of Jerome Lobo, the original, or to Dr Johnſon the tranſlator, or to the bookſeller, is what I am not able to ſay. But as the book itſelf is uſhered in by a very warm and particular recommendation of ſo celebrated an author as Dr Johnſon, and as I have in the courſe of this work ſpoke very contemptibly of that Jeſuit, I muſt, in my own vindication, make ſome obſervations upon the geography of this book, which, introduced into the world by ſuch authority, might elſe bring the little we know of this part of Africa into confuſion, from which its maps are as yet very far from being cleared.

Caxume * is ſaid to mean Axum, to be a city in Africa, capital of the kingdom of Tigrè Mahon in Abyſſinia. Now, long

---

* See Johnſon's tranſlation of Jerome Lobo, p. 29.

long ago, Mr Ludolf had ſhewn, from the teſtimony of Gregory the Abyſſinian, that there was no ſuch place in Abyſſinia as Tigrè Mahon. That there was, indeed, a large province called Tigrè, of which Axum was the capital; and Le Grande, the firſt publiſher of Jerome Lobo, has repeatedly ſaid the ſame. And Ludolf has given a very probable conjecture, that the firſt Portugueſe, ignorant of the Abyſſinian language, heard the officer commanding that province called Tigrè Mocuonen, which is governor of Tigré, and had miſtaken the name of his office for that of his province. Be that as it will, the reader may reſt aſſured there is no ſuch kingdom, province, or town in all Abyſſinia.

There ſtill remains, however, a difficulty much greater than this, and an error much more difficult to be corrected. Lobo is ſaid to have ſailed from the peninſula of India, and, being bound for Zeyla, to have embarked in a veſſel going to Caxume, or Axum, capital of Tigrè, and to have arrived there ſafely, and been well accommodated. Now Zeyla, he ſays, is a city in the kingdom of Adel, at the mouth of the Red Sea *; and Axum, being two hundred miles inland, in the middle of the kingdom of Tigrè, a ſhip going to Axum muſt have paſſed Zeyla 300 miles, or been 300 miles to the weſtward of it. Zeyla is not a city, as is ſaid, but an iſland. It is not in the kingdom of Adel, but in the bay of Tajoura, oppoſite to a kingdom of that name; but the iſland itſelf belongs to the Imam of Sana, ſovereign of Arabia Felix; ſo that it is inexplicable, how a ſhip going to Zeyla ſhould chooſe to land 300 miles beyond it; and ſtill more ſo, how, being once arrived

---

* See page 28.

arrived at Axum, they ſhould ſeek a ſhip to carry them back again to Zeyla, 300 miles eaſtward, when they were then going to Gondar, not much above a hundred miles weſt of Axum. This ſeems to me abſolutely impoſſible to explain.

Still, however, another difficulty remains; Tigré is ſaid, by the Jeſuits, and by M. Le Grande their hiſtorian, to be full of mountains, ſo high that the Alps and Appenines were very inconſiderable in compariſon. And ſuppoſe it was otherwiſe, there is no navigable river, indeed no river at all, that runs through Tigré into the Red Sea, and there is the deſert of Samhar to paſs, where there is no water at all. How is it poſſible a ſhip from the coaſt of Malabar ſhould get up 200 miles from any ſea among the mountains of Tigré? I hope the publiſher will compare this with any map he pleaſes, and correct it in his *errata*, otherwiſe his narrative is unintelligible, unleſs all this was intended to be placed to the account of miracles—Peter walked upon the water, and Lobo the Jeſuit ſailed upon dry land.

Dr Johnson, or his publiſher, involves his reader in another ſtrange perplexity. "Dancala is a city of Africa in Upper Ethiopia, upon the Nile, in the tract of Nubia, of which it is the capital;" and the emperor wrote, "that the miſſionaries might eaſily enter his dominions by the way of Dancala*." It is very difficult to underſtand how people, in a ſhip from India, could enter Abyſſinia by the way of Dancala, if that city is upon the Nile; becauſe no where, that I

know,

---

* Page 28.

know, is that river in Abyſſinia within 300 miles of any ſea; and, ſtill more ſo, how it could be in Nubia, and yet in Upper Ethiopia. Dongola is, indeed, the capital of Nubia; it is upon the Nile in 20° north latitude; but then it cannot be in Upper Ethiopia, but certainly in the Lower, and is not within a hundred miles of the Red Sea, and certainly not the way for a ſhip from India to get to Abyſſinia, which, ſailing down the Red Sea, it muſt have paſſed ſeveral hundred miles, and gone to the northward: Dongola, beſides, is in the heart of the great deſert of Beja, and cannot, with any degree of propriety, be ſaid to be eaſily acceſſible to any, no, not even upon camels, but impoſſible to ſhipping, as it is not within 200 miles of any ſea. On the other hand, Dancali, for which it may have been miſtaken, is a ſmall kingdom on the coaſt of the Red Sea, reaching to the frontiers of Abyſſinia; and through it the patriarch Mendes entered Abyſſinia, as has been ſaid in my hiſtory; but then Dancali is in lat. 12°, it is not in Nubia, nor upon the Nile, nor within ſeveral hundred miles of it.

AGAIN, Lobo has ſaid, (p. 30. 31.) "that a Portugueſe galliot was ordered to ſet him aſhore at Paté, whoſe inhabitants were man-eaters." This is a very whimſical choice of a place to land ſtrangers in, among man-eaters. I cannot conceive what advantage could be propoſed by landing men going to Abyſſinia ſo far to the ſouthward, among a people ſuch as this, who certainly, by their very manners, muſt be at war, and unconnected with all their neighbours. And many ages have paſſed without this reproach having fallen upon the inhabitants of the eaſt coaſt of the peninſula of Africa from any authentic teſtimony; and I am confident, after the few ſpecimens juſt given of the topographical knowledge of this author, his preſent teſtimony will not weigh much, from whatever hand this performance may have come.

M. de Montesquieu, among all his other talents a moſt excellent and accurate geographer, obſerves, that man-eaters were firſt mentioned when the ſouthern parts of the eaſt coaſt of the peninſula of Africa came to be unknown. Travellers of Jerome Lobo's caſt, delighting in the marvellous, did place theſe unſociable people beyond the promontory of Praſſum, becauſe nobody, at that time, did paſs the promontory of Praſſum.

Above 1200 years, theſe people were unknown, till Vaſques de Gama diſcovered their coaſt, and called them the civil or kind nation. By ſome lucky revolution in that long period, when they were left to themſelves, they ſeem moſt unaccountably to have changed both their diet and their manners. The Portugueſe conquered them, built towns among them, and, if they met with conſpiracies and treachery, theſe all originated in a mixture of Moors from Spain and Portugal, Europeans that had ſettled among them, and not among the natives themſelves. No man-eaters appeared till after the diſcovery of the Cape of Good Hope, when that of the new world, which followed it, made the Portugueſe abandon their ſettlements in the old; and this coaſt came as unknown to them as it had been to the Romans, when they traded only to Raptum and Praſſum, and made Anthropophagi of all the reſt. One would be almoſt tempted to believe that Jerome Lobo was a man-eater himſelf, and had taught this cuſtom to theſe ſavages. They had it not before his coming; they have never had it ſince; and it muſt have been with ſome ſiniſter intention like this, that a ſtranger would vo-

luntarily

luntarily ſeek a nation of man-eaters. It is nonſenſe to ſay, that a traveller could propoſe, as Lobo did, going into a far diſtant country, ſuch as Abyſſinia, under ſo very queſtionable a protection as a man-eater.

I WILL not take up my own, or the reader's time, in going through the multitude of errors in geography to be found in this book of Lobo's; I have given the reader my opinion of the author from the original, before I ſaw the tranſlation. I ſaid it was a heap of fables, and full of ignorance and preſumption; and I confeſs myſelf diſappointed that it has come from ſo celebrated a hand as the tranſlator, ſo very little amended, if indeed it can be ſaid to be amended at all.

DR JOHNSON, in the preface to the book, expreſſes himſelf in theſe words:—"The Portugueſe traveller (Jerome Lobo, his original) has amuſed his reader with no romantic abſurdities, or incredible fictions. He ſeems to have deſcribed things as he ſaw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have conſulted his ſenſes, not his imagination. He meets with no baſiliſks that deſtroy with their eyes; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants."

AT firſt reading this paſſage, I confeſs I thought it irony. As to what regards the cataract, one of the articles Dr Johnſon has condeſcended upon as truth, I had already ſpoken, while compoſing theſe memoirs in Abyſſinia, long before this new publication ſaw the light; and, upon a cool reviſal of the whole that I have ſaid, I cannot think of receding from any part of it, and therefore recommend it to the reader's peruſal. What we have now only to note, is the fidelity of Jerome Lobo, ſo ſtrongly vouched in the words I have juſt cited, in the article of baſiliſks, or ſerpents, which Dr Johnſon has choſen as one of the inſtances of his author's adhering to fact, contrary to the cuſtom of other writers on ſuch ſubjects.

"In croſſing a deſert, which was two days journey over, "I was in great danger of my life; for, as I lay on the "ground, I perceived myſelf ſeized with a pain which for- "ced me to riſe, and ſaw, about four yards from me, one of "thoſe ſerpents that *dart their poiſon from a diſtance.* Although "I roſe before he came very near me, I yet felt the effects of "his poiſonous breath; and, if I had lain a little longer, "had certainly died. I had recourſe to bezoar, a ſovereign "remedy againſt thoſe poiſons, which I always carried "about me. Theſe ſerpents are not long, but have a body "ſhort and thick, their bellies ſpeckled with brown, black, "and yellow. They have a wide mouth, with which they "draw in a great quantity of air, and, having retained it "ſome time, eject it with ſuch force, that they kill at four "yards diſtance. I only eſcaped by being ſomewhat farther "from him." (Chap. xii. p. 124.)

Now, as this is warranted, by one of ſuch authority as Dr Johnſon, to be neither imagination nor falſehood, we muſt think it a new ſyſtem of natural philoſophy, and conſider it as ſuch; and, in the firſt place, I would wiſh to know from the author, who ſeems perfectly informed, what ſpecies of ſerpent it is that he has quoted as darting their poiſon at a diſtance. Again, what ſpecies it is that, at the diſtance of 12 feet, kills a man by breathing on his back;

alſo,

alſo, what they call that ſpecies of ſerpent that, drawing in the ſame outward air which Jerome Lobo breathed, could ſo far pervert its quality as with it to kill at the diſtance of four yards. Surely ſuch a ſerpent, if he had no other characteriſtic in the world, would be deſcribed by a naturaliſt as the ſerpent with the foul ſtomach.—I never ſaw a poiſonous ſerpent in Abyſſinia whoſe belly is not white; ſo this one being ſpeckled, brown, black, and yellow, will be a direction when any ſuch is found, and ſerve as a warning not to come near him, at leaſt within the diſtance of four yards.

Jerome Lobo continues, "that this danger was not to be "much regarded in compariſon of another his negligence "brought him into. As he was picking up a ſkin that "lay upon the ground, he was ſtung by a ſerpent that left "its ſting in his finger; he picked out an extraneous ſub"ſtance about the bigneſs of an hair, which he imagined "was the ſting. This ſlight wound he took little notice of, "till his arm grew inflamed all over; his blood was infect"ed; he fell into convulſions, which were interpreted as "the ſigns of inevitable death." (Chap. xii. p. 125.)

Now, with all ſubmiſſion to Jerome Lobo, the firſt ſerpent had brought him within a near view of death; the ſecond did no more, for it did not kill him; how comes it that he ſays the firſt danger was nothing in compariſon to the ſecond? The firſt would have certainly killed him, by blowing upon his back, if he had been nearer than 12 feet. The other had nearly killed him by a ſting. Death was the end of them both. I cannot ſee the difference between the two dangers.

The firſt ſerpent was of a new ſpecies, that kills a man at the diſtance of 12 feet by breathing upon him. The ſecond was alſo new, for he killed by a ſting. We know of no ſuch power that any of the ſerpent kind have. If Dr Johnſon believes this, I will not ſay that it is the moſt improbable thing he ever gave credit to, but this I will ſay, that it is altogether different from what at this day is taught us by natural philoſophy. We eaſily ſee, by the ſtrain in which theſe ſtories are told, that all theſe fables of Lobo would have paſſed for miracles, had the converſion of Abyſſinia followed. They were preparatory ſteps for receiving him as confeſſor, had his merit not been ſufficient to have entitled him to a higher place in the kalendar. Rainy, miry, and cold countries, are not the favourite habitation of ſerpents. Abyſſinia is deluged with ſix months rain every year while the ſun is paſſing over it. It only enjoys clear weather when the ſun is fartheſt diſtant from it in the ſouthern hemiſphere; the days and nights are always nearly equal. Vipers are not found in a climate like this. Accordingly, I can teſtify, I never ſaw one of the kind in the high country of Abyſſinia all the time I lived there; and Tigré, where Jerome Lobo places the ſcene of his adventures, by being one of the higheſt provinces in the country, is ſurely not one of the moſt proper.

It was the 20th of January, at ſeven o'clock in the morning, we left Axum; our road was at firſt ſufficiently even, thro' ſmall vallies and meadows; we began to aſcend gently, but through a road exceedingly difficult in itſelf, by reaſon of large ſtones ſtanding on edge, or heaped one upon another; apparently the remains of an old large cauſeway, part of the magnificent works about Axum.

The laſt part of the journey made ample amends for the difficulties and fatigue we had ſuffered in the beginning. For our road, on every ſide, was perfumed with variety of flowering ſhrubs, chiefly different ſpecies of jeſſamin; one in particular of theſe called Agam (a ſmall four-leaved flower) impregnated the whole air with the moſt delicious odour, and covered the ſmall hills through which we paſſed, in ſuch profuſion, that we were, at times, almoſt overcome with its fragrance. The country all round had now the moſt beautiful appearance, and this was heightened by the fineſt of weather, and a temperature of air neither too hot nor too cold.

Not long after our loſing ſight of the ruins of this ancient capital of Abyſſinia, we overtook three travellers driving a cow before them; they had black goat ſkins upon their ſhoulders, and lances and ſhields in their hands, in other reſpects were but thinly cloathed; they appeared to be ſoldiers. The cow did not ſeem to be fatted for killing, and it occurred to us all that it had been ſtolen. This, however, was not our buſineſs, nor was ſuch an occurrence at all remarkable in a country ſo long engaged in war. We ſaw that our attendants attached themſelves in a particular manner to the three ſoldiers that were driving the cow, and held a ſhort converſation with them. Soon after, we arrived at the hithermoſt bank of the river, where I thought we were to pitch our tent. The drivers ſuddenly tript up the cow, and gave the poor animal a very rude fall upon the ground, which was but the beginning of her ſufferings. One of them ſat acroſs her neck, holding down her head by the horns, the other twiſted the halter about her forefeet, while the third, who had a knife in his hand, to my very great ſurpriſe, in place of taking her by the throat got aſtride

ſtride upon her belly before her hind-legs, and gave her a very deep wound in the upper part of her buttock.

From the time I had ſeen them throw the beaſt upon the ground, I had rejoiced, thinking, that when three people were killing a cow, they muſt have agreed to ſell part of her to us; and I was much diſappointed upon hearing the Abyſſinians ſay, that we were to paſs the river to the other ſide, and not encamp where I intended. Upon my propoſing they ſhould bargain for part of the cow, my men anſwered what they had already learned in converſation, that they were not then to kill her, that ſhe was not wholly theirs, and they could not ſell her. This awakened my curioſity; I let my people go forward, and ſtaid myſelf, till I ſaw, with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, two pieces, thicker, and longer than our ordinary beef ſteaks, cut out of the higher part of the buttock of the beaſt. How it was done I cannot poſitively ſay; becauſe judging the cow was to be killed from the moment I ſaw the knife drawn, I was not anxious to view that cataſtrophe, which was by no means an object of curioſity; whatever way it was done, it ſurely was adroitly, and the two pieces were ſpread upon the outſide of one of their ſhields.

One of them ſtill continued holding the head, while the other two were buſied in curing the wound. This too was done not in an ordinary manner; the ſkin which had covered the fleſh that was taken away was left entire, and flapped over the wound, and was faſtened to the correſponding part by two or more ſmall ſkewers, or pins. Whether they had put any thing under the ſkin between that and the wounded fleſh I know not, but at the river ſide where they were, they had prepared a cataplaſm of clay, with which they covered the wound; they then forced the animal to riſe, and drove it on before them, to furniſh them with a fuller meal when they ſhould meet their companions in the evening.

I could not but admire a dinner ſo truly ſoldier-like, nor did I ever ſee ſo commodious a manner of carrying proviſions along on the road as this was. I naturally attributed this to neceſſity, and the love of expedition. It was a liberty, to be ſure, taken with Chriſtianity; but what tranſgreſſion is not warranted to a ſoldier when diſtreſſed by his enemy in the field? I could not as yet conceive that this was the ordinary banquet of citizens, and even of prieſts, throughout all this country. In the hoſpitable, humane houſe of Janni, theſe living feaſts had never appeared. It is true we had ſeen raw meat, but no part of an animal torn from it with the blood. The firſt ſhocked us as uncommon, but the other as impious.

When firſt I mentioned this in England, as one of the ſingularities which prevailed in this barbarous country, I was told by my friends it was not believed. I aſked the reaſon of this diſbelief, and was anſwered, that people who had never been out of their own country, and others well acquainted with the manners of the world, for they had travelled as far as France, had agreed the thing was impoſſible, and therefore it was ſo. My friends counſelled me further, that as theſe men were infallible, and had each the leading of a circle, I ſhould by all means obliterate this from my journal, and not attempt to inculcate in the minds of my readers the belief of a thing that men who had travelled pronounced to be impoſſible. They ſuggeſted to me, in the moſt friendly manner, how rudely a very learned and worthy traveller had been treated for daring to maintain that he had eat part of a lion, a ſtory I have already taken notice of in my introduction. They ſaid, that, being convinced by theſe connoiſſeurs his having eat any part of a lion was *impoſſible*, he had abandoned this aſſertion altogether, and after only mentioned it in an appendix; and this was the fartheſt I could poſſibly venture.

Far from being a convert to ſuch prudential reaſons, I muſt for ever profeſs openly, that I think them unworthy of me. To repreſent as truth a thing I know to be a falſehood, not to avow a truth which I know I ought to declare; the one is fraud, the other cowardice; I hope I am equally diſtant from them both; and I pledge myſelf never to retract the fact here advanced, that the Abyſſinians do feed in common upon live fleſh, and that I myſelf have, for ſeveral years, been partaker of that diſagreeable and beaſtly diet. On the contrary, I have no doubt, when time ſhall be given to read this hiſtory to an end, there will be very few, if they have candour enough to own it, that will not be aſhamed of ever having doubted.

At 11 o'clock of the 20th, we pitched our tent in a ſmall plain, by the banks of a quick clear running ſtream; the ſpot is called Mai-Shum. There are no villages, at leaſt that we ſaw, here. A peaſant had made a very neat little garden on both ſides of the rivulet, in which he had ſown abundance of onions and garlic, and he had a ſpecies of pumpkin, which I thought was little inferior to a melon. This man gueſſed by our arms and horſes that we were hunters, and he brought us a preſent of the fruits of his garden, and begged our aſſiſtance againſt a number of wild boars, which carried havoc and deſolation through all his labours; marks of which were, indeed, too viſible everywhere. Such inſtances of induſtry are very rare in this country, and demanded encouragement. I paid him, therefore, for his greens; and ſent two of my ſervants with him into the wood, and got on horſeback myſelf. Mirza, my horſe, indeed, as well as his maſter, had recruited greatly during our ſtay at Adowa, under the hoſpitable roof of our good friend Janni.

Amongst us we killed five boars, all large ones, in the ſpace of about two hours; one of which meaſured ſix feet nine inches; and, though he ran at an amazing ſpeed near two miles, ſo as to be with difficulty overtaken by the horſe, and was ſtruck through and through with two heavy lances loaded at the end with iron, no perſon dared to come near him on foot, and he defended himſelf above half an hour, till, having no other arms left, I ſhot him with a horſe-piſtol. But the misfortune was, that, after our hunting had been crowned with ſuch ſucceſs, we did not dare to partake of the excellent veniſon we had acquired; for the Abyſſinians hold pork of all kinds in the utmoſt deteſtation; and I was now become cautious, leſt I ſhould give offence, being at no great diſtance from the capital.

On the 21ſt we left Mai-Shum at ſeven o'clock in the morning, proceeding through an open country, part ſown with teff, but moſtly overgrown with wild oats and high graſs. We afterwards travelled among a number of low hills, aſcending and deſcending many of them, which occaſioned more pleaſure than fatigue. The jeſſamin continued to increaſe upon us, and it was the common buſh of the country. Several new ſpecies appeared, with five, nine, eleven petals, and plenty of the agam with four, theſe being all white. We found alſo large buſhes of yellow, and orange and yellow jeſſamin, beſides fine trees of kummel, and the boha, both of the largeſt ſize, beautifully covered with fruit and flowers, which we never before had ſeen.

We now deſcended into a plain called Selech-lecha, the village of that name being two miles eaſt of us. The country here has an air of gaiety and chearfulneſs ſuperior to any thing we had ever yet ſeen. Poncet * was right when he compared it to the moſt beauteous part of Provence. We croſſed the plain through hedge-rows of flowering ſhrubs, among which the honeyſuckle now made a principal figure, which is of one ſpecies only, the ſame known in England; but the flower is larger and perfectly white, not coloured on the outſide as our honeyſuckle is. Fine trees of all ſizes were everywhere interſperſed; and the vine, with ſmall black grapes of very good flavour, hung in many places in feſtoons, joining tree to tree, as if they had been artificially twined and intended for arbours.

After having paſſed this plain, we again entered a cloſe country through defiles between mountains, thick covered with wood and buſhes. We pitched our tent by the waterſide judiciouſly enough as travellers, being quite ſurrounded with buſhes, which prevented us from being ſeen in any direction.

---

* Poncet's voyage to Ethiopia, p. 99.

As the boha was the principal tree here, and in great beauty, being then in flower, I let the caravan paſs, and alighted to make a proper choice for a drawing, when I heard a cry from my ſervants, "Robbers! Robbers!" I immediately got upon my mule to learn what alarm this might be, and ſaw, to my great ſurpriſe, part of my baggage ſtrewed on the ground, the ſervants running, ſome leading, others on foot driving ſuch of their mules as were unloaded before them; in a word, every thing in the greateſt confuſion poſſible. Having got to the edge of the wood, they faced about, and began to prepare their fire-arms; but as I ſaw the king's two ſervants, and the man that Janni ſent with us, endeavouring all they could to pitch the tent, and my horſe ſtanding peaceably by them, I forbade our fugitives to fire, till they ſhould receive orders from me. I now rode immediately up to the tent, and in my way was ſaluted from among the buſhes with many ſtones, one of which gave me a violent blow upon the foot. At the ſame inſtant I received another blow with a ſmall unripe pumpkin, juſt upon the belly, where I was ſtrongly defended by the coarſe cotton cloth wrapped ſeveral times about me by way of ſaſh or girdle. As robbers fight with other arms than pumpkins, when I ſaw this fall at my feet I was no longer under apprehenſion.

NOTWITHSTANDING this diſagreeable reception, I advanced towards them, crying out, We were friends, and Ras Michael's friends; and deſired only to ſpeak to them, and would give them what they wanted. A few ſtones were the only anſwer, but they did no hurt. I then gave Yaſine my gun, thinking that might have given offence. The top of the tent being now up, two men came forward making great complaints, but of what I did not underſtand, only that they ſeemed to accuſe us of having wronged them. In ſhort, we found the matter was this; one of the Moors had taken a heap of ſtraw which he was carrying to his aſs, but the proprietor, at ſeeing this, had alarmed the village. Every body had taken lances and ſhields, but, not daring to approach for fear of the fire-arms, they had contented themſelves with ſhowering ſtones at us from their hiding-places, at a diſtance from among the buſhes. We immediately told them, however, that though, as the king's gueſt, I had a title to be furniſhed with what was neceſſary, yet, if they were averſe to it, I was very well content to pay for every thing they furniſhed, both for my men and beaſts; but that they muſt throw no ſtones, otherwiſe we would defend ourſelves.

Our tent being now pitched, and every thing in order, a treaty ſoon followed. They conſented to ſell us what we wanted, but at extravagant prices, which, however, I was content to comply with. But a man of the village, acquainted with one of the king's ſervants, had communicated to him, that the pretence of the Moor's taking the ſtraw was not really the reaſon of the uproar, for they made no uſe of it except to burn; but that a report had been ſpread abroad, that an action had happened between Faſil and Ras Michael, in which the latter had been defeated, and the country no longer in fear of the Ras, had indulged themſelves in their uſual exceſſes, and, taking us for a caravan of Mahometans with merchandiſe, had reſolved to rob us.

Welleta Michael, grandſon to Ras Michael, commanded this part of the province; and being but thirteen years of age, was not with his grandfather in the army, nor was he then at home, but at Gondar. However, his mother, Ozoro Welleta Michael, was at home, and her houſe juſt on the hill above. One of the king's ſervants had ſtolen away privately, and told her what had happened. The ſame evening, a party was ſent down to the village, who took the ringleaders and carried them away, and left us for the night. They brought us a preſent alſo of proviſions, and excuſes for what had happened, warning us to be upon our guard the reſt of the way, but they gave us poſitive aſſurance, at the ſame time, that no action had happened between Faſil and Ras Michael; on the contrary, it was confidently reported, that Faſil had left Buré, and retired to Metchakel, where, probably, he would repaſs the Nile into his own country, and ſtay there till the rains ſhould oblige Michael to return to Gondar.

On the 22d, we left Selech-lecha at ſeven o'clock in the morning, and, at eight, paſſed a village two hundred yards on our left, without ſeeing any one; but, advancing half a mile further, we ſaw a number of armed men from ſixty to eighty, and we were told they were reſolved to oppoſe our paſſage, unleſs their comrades, taken the night before, were releaſed. The people that attended us on the part of Welleta Michael, as our eſcort, conſidered this as an inſult, and adviſed me by all means to turn to the left to another village immediately under the hill, on which the houſe of Welleta Michael, mother to Welleta Gabriel their governor, was ſituated; as there we ſhould find ſufficient aſſiſtance to force theſe opponents to reaſon. We accordingly turned to the left, and marching through thick buſhes, came to the top of the hill above the village, in ſight of the governor's houſe, juſt as about twenty men of the enemy's party reached the bottom of it.

The governor's ſervants told us, that now was the time if they advanced to fire upon them, in which caſe they would inſtantly diſperſe, or elſe they would cut us off from the village. But I could not enter into the force of this reaſoning, becauſe, if this village was ſtrong enough to protect us, which was the cauſe of our turning to the left to ſeek it, theſe twenty men, putting themſelves between us and the village, took the moſt dangerous ſtep for themſelves poſſible, as they muſt unavoidably be deſtroyed; and, if the village was not ſtrong enough to protect us, to begin with bloodſhed was the way to loſe our lives before a ſuperior enemy. I therefore called to the twenty men to ſtop where they were, and ſend only one of their company to me; and, upon their not paying any attention, I ordered Yaſine to fire a large blunderbuſs over their heads, ſo as not to touch them. Upon the report, they all fled, and a number of people flocked to us from other villages; for my part, I believe ſome who had appeared againſt us came afterwards and joined us. We ſoon ſeemed to have a little army, and, in about half an hour, a party came from the governor's houſe with twenty lances and ſhields, and ſix firelocks, and, preſently after, the whole multitude diſperſed. It was about ten o'clock when, under their eſcort, we arrived at the town of Sirè, and pitched our tent in a ſtrong ſituation, in a very deep gulley on the weſt extremity of the town.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Journey from Siré to Addergey, and Tranſactions there.

THE province of Siré, properly ſo called, reaches from Axum to the Tacazzé. The town of Sirè is ſituated on the brink of a very ſteep, narrow valley, and through this the road lies which is almoſt impaſſable. In the midſt of this valley runs a brook bordered with palm-trees, ſome of which are grown to a conſiderable ſize, but bear no fruit; they were the firſt we had ſeen in Abyſſinia.

THE town of Sirè is larger than that of Axum; it is in form of a half-moon fronting the plain, but its greateſt breadth is at the weſt end; all the houſes are of clay, and thatched; the roofs are in form of cones, as, indeed, are all in Abyſſinia. Sirè is famous for a manufacture of coarſe cotton cloths, which paſs for current money through all the province of Tigré, and are valued at a drachm, the tenth-part of a wakea of gold, or near the value of an imperial dollar each; their breadth is a yard and quarter. Beſides theſe, beads, needles, cohol, and incenſe at times only, are conſidered as money. The articles depend greatly on chance, which or whether any are current for the time or not; but the latter is often not demanded; and, for the firſt, there are modes and faſhions among theſe barbarians, and all, except thoſe of a certain colour and form, are uſeleſs. We have already ſpoken of the faſhions, ſuch as we have found them, at Kella, and we heard they were the ſame here at Siré. But theſe people were not of a humour to buy and ſell with us. They were not perfectly ſatisfied that Michael was alive, and waited only a confirmation of the news of his defeat, to make their own terms with all ſtrangers unfortunate enough to fall into their hands. On the other hand, we were in poſſeſſion of ſuperior force, and, knowing their inclinations, we treated them pretty much in the manner they would have done us.

On the 22d of January, at night, I obſerved the paſſage of many ſtars over the meridian, and, after that, of the ſun on the 23d at noon; taking a medium of all obſervations, I determined the latitude of Siré to be 14° 4′ 35″ north. The ſame evening, I obſerved an immerſion of the firſt ſatellite of Jupiter, by which I concluded its longitude to be 38° 0′ 15″ eaſt of the meridian of Greenwich.

Although Sirè is ſituated in one of the fineſt countries in the world, like other places it has its inconveniencies. Putrid fevers, of the very worſt kind, are almoſt conſtant here; and there did then actually reign a ſpecies of theſe that ſwept away a number of people daily. I did not think the behaviour of the inhabitants of this province to me was ſuch as required my expoſing myſelf to the infection for

the

the ſake of relieving them; I, therefore, left the fever and them to ſettle accounts together, without anywiſe interfering.

At Siré we heard the good news that Ras Michael, on the 10th of this month, had come up with Faſil at Fagitta, and entirely diſperſed his army, after killing 10,000 men. This account, though not confirmed by any authority, ſtruck all the mutinous of this province with awe; and every man returned to his duty for fear of incurring the diſpleaſure of this ſevere governor, which they well knew would inſtantly be followed by more than an adequate portion of vengeance, eſpecially againſt thoſe that had not accompanied him to the field.

On the 24th, at ſeven o'clock in the morning, we ſtruck our tent at Siré, and paſſed through a vaſt plain. All this day we could diſcern no mountains, as far as eye could reach, but only ſome few detached hills, ſtanding ſeparate on the plain, covered with high graſs, which they were then burning, to produce new with the firſt rains. The country to the north is altogether flat, and perfectly open; and though we could not diſcover one village this day, yet it ſeemed to be well inhabited, from the many people we ſaw on different parts of the plain, ſome at harveſt, and ſome herding their cattle. The villages were probably concealed from us on the other ſide of the hills.

At four o'clock, we alighted at Maiſhinni at the bottom of a high, ſteep, bare cliff of red marble, bordering on purple, and very hard. Behind this is the ſmall village of Maiſhinni; and, on the ſouth, another ſtill higher hill, whoſe top runs in an even ridge like a wall. At the bottom of this cliff, where our tent was pitched, the ſmall rivulet Maiſbinni riſes, which, gentle and quiet as it then was, runs very violently in winter, firſt north from its ſource, and then winding to S. W. it falls in ſeveral cataracts, near a hundred feet high, into a narrow valley, through which it makes its way into the Tacazzé. Maiſbinni, for wild and rude beauties, may compare with any place we had ever ſeen.

This day was the firſt cloudy one we had met with, or obſerved this year. The ſun was covered for ſeveral hours, which announced our being near the large river Tacazzè.

On the 25th, at ſeven in the morning, leaving Maiſbinni, we continued on our road, ſhaded with trees of many different kinds. At half an hour after eight we paſſed the river, which at this place runs weſt; our road this day was thro' the ſame plain as yeſterday, but broken and full of holes. At ten o'clock we reſted in a large plain called Dagaſhaha; a hill in form of a cone ſtood ſingle about two miles north from us; a thin ſtraggling wood was to the S. E; and the water, riſing in ſpungy, boggy, and dirty ground, was very indifferent; it lay to the weſt of us.

Dagashaha is a bleak and diſagreeable quarter; but the mountain itſelf, being ſeen far off, was of great uſe to us in adjuſting our bearings; the rather that, taking our departure from Dagaſhaha, we came immediately in ſight of the high mountain of Samen, where Lamalmon, one of that ridge, is by much the moſt conſpicuous; and over this lies the paſſage, or high road, to Gondar. We likewiſe ſee the rugged, hilly country of Salent, adjoining to the foot of the mountains of Samen. We obſerved no villages this day from Maiſbinni to Dagaſhaha; nor did we diſcern, in the face of the country, any ſigns of culture or marks of great population. We were, indeed, upon the frontiers of two provinces which had for many years been at war.

On the 26th, at ſix o'clock in the morning, we left Dagaſhaha. Our road was through a plain and level country, but, to appearance, deſolated and uninhabited, being overgrown with high bent graſs and buſhes, as alſo deſtitute of water. We paſſed the ſolitary village Adega, three miles on our left, the only one we had ſeen. At eight o'clock we came to the brink of a prodigious valley, in the bottom of which runs the Tacazzè, next to the Nile the largeſt river in Upper Abyſſinia. It riſes in Angot (at leaſt its principal branch) in a plain champain country, about 200 miles S. E. of Gondar, near a ſpot called Souami Midre. It has three ſpring heads, or ſources, like the Nile; near it is the ſmall village Gourri *.

Angot is now in poſſeſſion of the Galla, whoſe chief, Guangoul, is the head of the weſtern Galla, once the moſt formidable invader of Abyſſinia. The other branch of the Tacazzé riſes in the frontiers of Begemder, near Dabuco; whence, running between Gouliou, Laſta, and Beleſſen, it joins with the Angot branch, and becomes the boundary between Tigré and the other great diviſion of the country called Amhara. This diviſion ariſes from language only, for the Tacazzé paſſes nowhere near the province of Amhara; only all to the eaſt of the Tacazzè is, in this general way of dividing the country, called Tigrè, and all to the weſtward,

---

* It ſignifies *cold*.

weſtward, from the Tacazzé to the Nile, Gojam, and the Agows, is called Amhara, becauſe the language of that province is there ſpoken, and not that of Tigré or Geez. But I would have my reader on his guard againſt the belief that no languages but theſe two are ſpoken in theſe diviſions; many different dialects are ſpoken in little diſtricts in both, and, in ſome of them, neither the language of Tigrè nor that of Amhara is underſtood.

I HAVE already ſufficiently dwelt upon the ancient hiſtory, the names, manners, and people that inhabit the banks of this river. It was the Siris (or river of the dog-ſtar) whilſt that negro, uncivilized people, the Cuſhites of the iſland of Meroë, reſided upon its banks. It was then called the Tannuſh Abay, or the leſſer of two rivers that ſwelled with the tropical rains, which was the name the peaſants, or unlearned, gave it, from compariſon with the Nile. It was the Tacazzè in Derkin or the dwelling of the Taka, before it joined the Nile in Beja, and it was the Aſtaboras of thoſe of the ancients that took the Nile for the Siris. It is now the Atbara, giving its name to that peninſula, which it incloſes on the eaſt as the Nile does on the weſt, and which was formerly the iſland of Meroë; but it never was the Tekeſel, as authors have called it, deriving the name from the Ethiopic word Taka, which undoubtedly ſignifies, fear, terror, diſtreſs, or ſadneſs; I mean, this was never the derivation of its name. Far from this idea, our Tacazzé is one of the pleaſanteſt rivers in the world, ſhaded with fine lofty trees, its banks covered with buſhes inferior in fragrance to no garden in the univerſe; its ſtream is the moſt limpid, its water excellent, and full of good fiſh of great variety, as its coverts are of all ſorts of game.

It muſt be confeſſed, that, during the inundation, theſe things wear a contrary face. It carries in its bed near one-third of all the water that falls in Abyſſinia; and we ſaw the mark the ſtream had reached the preceding year, eighteen feet above the bottom of the river, which we do not know was the higheſt point that it arrived at. But three fathoms it certainly had rolled in its bed; and this prodigious body of water, paſſing furiouſly from a high ground in a very deep deſcent, tearing up rocks and large trees in its courſe, and forcing down their broken fragments ſcattered on its ſtream, with a noiſe like thunder echoed from a hundred hills, theſe very naturally ſuggeſt an idea, that, from theſe circumſtances, it is very rightly called the *terrible*. But then it muſt be conſidered, that all rivers in Abyſſinia at the ſame time equally overflow; that every ſtream makes theſe ravages upon its banks; and that there is nothing in this that peculiarly affects the Tacazzè, or ſhould give it this ſpecial name: at leaſt, ſuch is my opinion; though it is with great willingneſs I leave every reader in poſſeſſion of his own, eſpecially in etymology.

At half an hour paſt eight we began a gradual deſcent, at firſt eaſily enough, till we croſſed the ſmall brook called Maitemquet, or, *the water of baptiſm*. We then began to deſcend very rapidly in a narrow path, winding along the ſide of the mountain, all ſhaded with lofty timber-trees of great beauty. About three miles further we came to the edge of the ſtream at the principal ford of the Tacazzé, which is very firm and good; the bottom conſiſts of ſmall pebbles, without either ſand or large ſtones. The river here at this time was fully 200 yards broad, the water perfectly clear, and running very ſwiftly; it was about three feet deep. This was the dry

ſeaſon

ſeaſon of the year, when moſt rivers in Abyſſinia ran now no more.

In the middle of the ſtream we met a deſerter from Ras Michael's army, with his firelock upon his ſhoulder, driving before him two miſerable girls about ten years old, ſtark-naked, and almoſt famiſhed to death, the part of the booty which had fallen to his ſhare in laying waſte the country of Maitſha, after the battle. We aſked him of the truth of this news, but he would give us no ſatisfaction; ſometimes he ſaid there had been a battle, ſometimes none. He apparently had ſome diſtruſt, that one or other of the facts, being allowed to be true, might determine us as to ſome deſign we might have upon him and his booty. He had not, in my eyes, the air of a conqueror, but rather of a coward that had ſneaked away, and ſtolen theſe two miſerable wretches he had with him. I aſked where Michael was? If at Buré? where, upon defeat of Faſil, he naturally would be. He ſaid, No; he was at Ibaba, the capital of Maitſha; and this gave us no light, it being the place he would go to before, while detachments of his army might be employed in burning and laying waſte the country of the enemy he had determined to ruin, rather than return to it ſome time after a battle. At laſt we were obliged to leave him. I gave him ſome flour and tobacco, both which he took very thankfully; but further intelligence he would not give.

The banks of the Tacazzé are all covered, at the water's edge, with tamariſks; behind which grow high and ſtraight trees, that ſeem to have gained additional ſtrength from having often reſiſted the violence of the river. Few of theſe ever loſe their leaves, but are either covered with fruit, flower, or foliage the whole year; indeed, abundantly with all three during the ſix months fair weather. The Bohabab, indeed, called, in the Amharic language, Dooma, loſes its leaf; it is the largeſt tree in Abyſſinia; the trunk is never high; it diminiſhes very regularly from the top to the bottom, but not beautifully; it has the appearance of a large cannon, and puts out a multitude of ſtrong branches, which do not fall low, or nearly horizontal, but follow a direction, making all of them ſmaller angles than that of 45°. The fruit is of the ſhape of a melon, rather longer for its thickneſs; within are black ſeeds in each of the cells, into which it is divided, and round them a white ſubſtance, very like fine ſugar, which is ſweet, with a ſmall degree of very pleaſant acid. I never ſaw it either in leaf or flower; the fruit hang dry upon the branches when they are deprived of both. The wood of this tree is ſoft and ſpungy, and of no uſe. The wild bees perforate the trunk, and lodge their honey in the holes made in it; and this honey is preferred to any other in Abyſſinia.

Beautiful and pleaſant, however, as this river is, like every thing created, it has its diſadvantages. From the falling of the firſt rains in March till November it is death to ſleep in the country adjoining to it, both within and without its banks; the whole inhabitants retire and live in villages on the top of the neighbouring mountains; and *theſe* are all robbers and aſſaſſins, who deſcend from their habitations on the heights to lie in wait for, and plunder the travellers that paſs. Notwithſtanding great pains have been taken by Michael, his ſon, and grandſon, governors of

Tigré and Siré, this paſſage had never been ſo far cleared but, every month, people are cut off.

The plenty of fiſh in this river occaſions more than an ordinary number of crocodiles to reſort hither. Theſe are ſo daring and fearleſs, that when the river ſwells, ſo as to be paſſable only by people upon rafts, or ſkins blown up with wind, they are frequently carried off by theſe voracious and vigilant animals. There are alſo many hippopotami, which, in this country, are called Gomari. I never ſaw any of theſe in the Tacazzè; but at night we heard them ſnort, or groan, in many parts of the river near us. There are alſo vaſt multitudes of lions and hyænas in all theſe thickets. We were very much diſturbed by them all night. The ſmell of our mules and horſes had drawn them in numbers about our tent, but they did us no further harm, except obliging us to watch. I found the latitude of the ford, by many obſervations, the night of the 26th, taking a medium of them all, to be 13° 42′ 45″ north.

The river Tacazzè is, as I have already ſaid, the boundary of the province of Sirè. We now entered that of Samen, which was hoſtile to us, being commanded by Ayto Tesfos, who, ſince the murder of Joas, had never laid down his arms, nor acknowledged his neighbour, Michael, as Ras, nor Hannes the king, laſt made, as ſovereign. He had remained on the top of a high rock called *the Jews Rock*, about eight miles from the ford. For theſe reaſons, as well as that it was the moſt agreeable ſpot we had ever yet ſeen, we left our ſtation on the Tacazzè with great regret.

On the 27th of January, a little paſt ſix in the morning, we continued ſome ſhort way along the river's ſide, and, at forty minutes paſt ſix o'clock, came to Ingerohha, a ſmall rivulet riſing in the plain above, which, after a ſhort courſe through a deep valley, joins the Tacazzè. At half paſt ſeven we left the river, and began to aſcend the mountains, which forms the ſouth ſide of the valley, or banks of that river. The path is narrow, winds as much, and is as ſteep as the other, but not ſo woody. What makes it, however, ſtill more diſagreeable is, that every way you turn you have a perpendicular precipice into a deep valley below you. At half paſt eight we arrived at the top of the mountain; and, at half paſt nine, halted at Tabulaqué, having all the way paſſed among ruined villages, the monuments of Michael's cruelty or juſtice; for it is hard to ſay whether the cruelty, robberies, and violence of the former inhabitants did not deſerve the ſevereſt chaſtiſement.

We ſaw many people feeding cattle on the plain, and we again opened a market for flour and other proviſions, which we procured in barter for cohol, incenſe, and beads. None but the young women appeared. They were of a lighter colour, taller, and in general more beautiful than thoſe at Kella. Their noſes ſeemed flatter than thoſe of the Abyſſinians we had yet ſeen. Perhaps the climate here was beginning that feature ſo conſpicuous in the negroes in general, and particularly of thoſe in this country called Shangalla, from whoſe country theſe people are not diſtant above two days journey. They ſeemed inclined to be very hard in all bargains but thoſe of one kind, in which they were moſt reaſonable and liberal. They all agreed, that theſe favours ought to be given and not ſold, and that all coyneſs and courtſhip was but loſs of time, which always might be employed better to the ſatisfaction of both. Theſe people are leſs gay than thoſe at Kella, and their converſation more rough and peremptory. They underſtood both the Tigré language and Amharic, although we ſuppoſed it was in compliance to us that they converſed chiefly in the former.

Our tent was pitched at the head of Ingerolliha, on the north of the plain of Tabulaqué. This river riſes among the rocks at the bottom of a little eminence, in a ſmall ſtream, which, from its ſource, runs very ſwiftly, and the water is warm. The peaſants told us, that, in winter, in time of the rains, it became hot, and ſmoked. It was in taſte, however, good; nor did we perceive any kind of mineral in it. Tabulaqué, Anderaſſa, and Menteſegla belong to the Shum of Addergey, and the viceroy of Samen, Ayto Teſfos. The large town of Hauza is about eight miles ſouth-and-by-eaſt of this.

On the 28th, at forty minutes paſt ſix o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey; and, at half paſt ſeven, ſaw the ſmall village Motecha on the top of the mountain, half a mile ſouth from us. At eight, we croſſed the river Aira; and, at half paſt eight, the river Tabul, the boundary of the diſtrict of Tabulaqué thick covered with wood, and eſpecially a ſort of cane, or bamboo, ſolid within, called there Shemale, which is uſed in making ſhafts for javelins, or light darts thrown from the hand, either on foot or on horſeback, at hunting or in war.

We alighted on the ſide of Anderaſſa, rather a ſmall ſtream, and which had now ceaſed running, but which gives the name to the diſtrict through which we were paſſing. Its water is muddy and ill-taſted, and falls into the Tacazzè, as do all the rivers we had yet paſſed. Dagaſhaha bears N. N. E. from this ſtation. A great dew fell this night; the firſt we had yet obſerved.

The 29th, at ſix o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey from Anderaſſa, through thick woods of ſmall trees, quite overgrown, and covered with wild oats, reeds, and long graſs, ſo that it was very difficult to find a path through them. We were not without conſiderable apprehenſion, from our nearneſs to the Shangalla, who were but two days journey diſtant from us to the W. N. W. and had frequently made excurſions to the wild country where we now were. Hauza was upon a mountain ſouth from us; after travelling along the edge of a hill, with the river on our left hand, we croſſed it: it is called the Bowiha, and is the largeſt we had lately ſeen.

At nine o'clock we encamped upon the ſmall river Angari, that gives its name to a diſtrict which begins at the Bowiha where Anderaſſa ends. The river Angari is much ſmaller than the Bowiha: it riſes to the weſtward in a plain near Monteſegla; after running half a mile, it falls down a ſteep precipice into a valley, then turns to the N. E. and, after a courſe of two miles and a half farther, joins the Bowiha a little above the ford.

The ſmall village Angari lies about two miles S. S. W. on the top of a hill. Hauza (which ſeems a large town formed by a collection of many villages) is ſix miles ſouth, pleaſantly ſituated among a variety of mountains, all of different and extraordinary ſhapes; ſome are ſtraight like columns, and ſome ſharp in the point, and broad in the baſe, like pyramids and obeliſks, and ſome like cones. All theſe, for the moſt part inacceſſible, unleſs with pain and danger to thoſe that know the paths, are places of refuge and ſafety in time of war, and are agreeably ſeparated from each other by ſmall plains producing grain. Some of theſe, however, have at the top water and ſmall flats that can be ſown, ſufficient to maintain a number of men, independent of what is doing below them. Hauza ſignifies *delight*, or *pleaſure*, and, probably, ſuch a ſituation of the country has given the name to it. It is chiefly inhabited by Mahometan merchants, is the *entre-pot* between Maſuah and Gondar, and there are here people of very conſiderable ſubſtance.

THE 30th, at ſeven in the morning, we left Angari, keeping along the ſide of the river. We then aſcended a high hill covered with graſs and trees, through a very difficult and ſteep road; which ending, we came to a ſmall and agreeable plain, with pleaſant hills on each ſide; this is called Menteſegla. At half paſt ſeven we were in the middle of three villages of the ſame name, two to the right and one on the left, about half a mile diſtance. At half paſt nine we paſſed a ſmall river called Daracoy, which ſerves as the boundary between Addergey and this ſmall diſtrict Menteſegla. At a quarter paſt ten, we incamped at Addergey, near a ſmall rivulet called Mai-Lumi, the river of limes, or lemons, in a plain ſcarce a mile ſquare, ſurrounded on each ſide with very thick wood in form of an amphitheatre. Above this wood, are bare, rugged, and barren mountains. Midway in the cliff is a miſerable village, that ſeems rather to hang than to ſtand there, ſcarce a yard of level ground being before it to hinder its inhabitants from falling down the precipice. The wood is full of lemons and wild citrons, from which it acquires its name. Before the tent, to the weſtward, was a very deep valley, which terminated this little plain in a tremendous precipice.

The river Mai-Lumi, riſing above the village, falls into the wood, and there it divides itſelf in two; one branch ſurrounds the north of the plain, the other the ſouth, and falls down a rock on each ſide of the valley, where they unite, and, after having run about a quarter of a mile further, are precipitated into a cataract of 150 feet high, and run in a direction ſouth-weſt into the Tacazzé. The river Mai-Lumi was, at this time, but ſmall, although it is violent in winter; beyond this valley are five hills, and on the top of each is a village. The Shum reſides in the one that is in the middle. He bade us a ſeeming hearty welcome, but had malice in his heart againſt us, and only waited to know for certainty if it was a proper time to gratify his avarice. A report was ſpread about with great confidence, that Ras Michael had been defeated by Faſil; that Gondar had rebelled, and Woggora was all in arms; ſo that it was certain loſs of life to attempt the paſſage of Lamalmon.

For our part, we conceived this ſtory to be without foundation, and that, on the contrary, the news were true which we had heard at Siré and Adowa, *viz.* That Michael was victorious, and Faſil beaten; and we were, therefore, reſolved to abide by this, as well knowing, that, if the contrary had happened, every place between the Tacazzè and Gondar was as fatal to us as any thing we were to meet with on Lamalmon

mon could be; the change of place made no difference; the diſpoſitions of the people towards Michael and his friends we knew to be the ſame throughout the kingdom, and that our only ſafety remained on certain and good news coming from the army, or in the finiſhing our journey with expedition, before any thing bad happened, or was certainly known.

The hyænas this night devoured one of the beſt of our mules. They are here in great plenty, and ſo are lions; the roaring and grumbling of the latter, in the part of the wood neareſt our tent, greatly diſturbed our beaſts, and prevented them from eating their provender. I lengthened the ſtrings of my tent, and placed the beaſts between them. The white ropes, and the tremulous motion made by the impreſſion of the wind, frightened the lions from coming near us. I had procured from Janni two ſmall braſs bells, ſuch as the mules carry. I had tied theſe to the ſtorm-ſtrings of the tent, where their noiſe, no doubt, greatly contributed to our beaſts ſafety from theſe ravenous, yet cautious animals, ſo that we never ſaw them; but the noiſe they made, and, perhaps, their ſmell, ſo terrified the mules, that, in the morning, they were drenched in ſweat as if they had been a long journey.

The brutiſh hyæna was not ſo to be deterred. I ſhot one of them dead on the night of the 31ſt of January, and, on the 2d of February, I fired at another ſo near, that I was confident of killing him. Whether the balls had fallen out, or that I had really miſſed him with the firſt barrel, I know not, but he gave a ſnarl and a kind of bark upon the firſt ſhot, advancing directly upon me as if unhurt. The ſecond ſhot, however, took place, and laid him without motion on the ground. Yaſine and his men killed another with a pike; and ſuch was their determined coolneſs, that they ſtalked round about us with the familiarity of a dog, or any other domeſtic animal brought up with man.

But we were ſtill more incommoded by a leſſer animal, a large, black ant, little leſs than an inch long, which, coming out from under the ground, demoliſhed our carpets, which they cut all into ſhreds, and part of the lining of our tent likewiſe, and every bag or ſack they could find. We had firſt ſeen them in great numbers at Angari, but here they were intolerable. Their bite cauſes a conſiderable inflammation, and the pain is greater than that which ariſes from the bite of a ſcorpion; they are called *gundan*.

On the 1ſt of February the Shum ſent his people to value, as he ſaid, our merchandiſe, that we might pay cuſtom. Many of the Moors, in our caravan, had left us to go a near way to Hauza. We had at moſt five or ſix aſſes, including thoſe belonging to Yaſine. I humoured them ſo far as to open the caſes where were the teleſcopes and quadrant, or, indeed, rather ſhewed them open, as they were not ſhut from the obſervation I had been making. They could only wonder at things they had never before ſeen.

On the 2d of February the Shum came himſelf, and a violent altercation enſued. He inſiſted upon Michael's defeat: I told him the contrary news were true, and begged him to beware leſt it ſhould be told to the Ras upon his return that he had propagated ſuch a falſehood. I told him alſo we had advice that the Ras's ſervants were now waiting for us at Lamalmon, and inſiſted upon his ſuffering us to depart. On the other hand, he threatened to ſend us to Ayto Tesfos. I anſwered, "Ayto Tesfos was a friend to Ayto Aylo, under whoſe protection I was, and a ſervant to the Iteghé, and was likelier to puniſh him for uſing me ill, than to approve of it, but that I would not ſuffer him to ſend me either to Ayto Tesfos, or an inch out of the road in which I was going." He ſaid, "That I was mad;" and held a conſultation with his people for about half an hour, after which he came in again, ſeemingly quite another man, and ſaid, he would diſpatch us on the morrow, which was the 3d, and would ſend us that evening ſome proviſions. And, indeed, we now began to be in need, having only flour barely ſufficient to make bread for one meal next day. The miſerable village on the clift had nothing to barter with us; and none from the five villages about the Shum had come near us, probably by his order. As he had ſoftened his tone, ſo did I mine. I gave him a ſmall preſent, and he went away repeating his promiſes. But all that evening paſſed without proviſion, and all next day without his coming, ſo we got every thing ready for our departure. Our ſupper did not prevent our ſleeping, as all our proviſion was gone, and we had taſted nothing all that day ſince our breakfaſt.

The country of the Shangalla lies forty miles N. N. W. of this, or rather more weſterly. All this diſtrict from the Tacazzé is called, in the language of Tigré, Salent, and Talent in Amharic. This probably ariſes from the name being originally ſpelled with (Tz), which has occaſioned the difference, the one language omitting the firſt letter, the other the ſecond.

At Addergey, the 31ſt day of January, at noon, I obſerved the meridian altitude of the ſun, and, at night, the paſſage of ſeven different ſtars over the meridian, by a medium of all which, I found that the latitude of Addergey is 13° 24′ 56″ North. And on the morning of the 1ſt of February, at the ſame place, I obſerved an immerſion of the ſecond ſatellite of Jupiter, by which I concluded the longitude of Addergey to be 37° 57′ eaſt of the meridian of Greenwich.

On the 4th of February, at half paſt nine in the morning, we left Addergey: hunger preſſing us, we were prepared to do it earlier, and for this we had been up ſince five in the morning; but our loſs of a mule obliged us, when we packed up our tent, to arrange our baggage differently. While employed at making ready for our departure, which was juſt in the dawn of day, a hyæna, unſeen by any of us, faſtened upon one of Yaſine's aſſes, and had almoſt pulled his tail away. I was buſied at gathering the tent-pins into a ſack, and had placed my muſket and bayonet ready againſt a tree, as it is at that hour, and the cloſe of the evening, you are always to be on guard againſt banditti. A boy, who was ſervant to Yaſine, ſaw the hyæna firſt, and flew to my muſket. Yaſine was disjoining the poles of the tent, and, having one half of the largeſt in his hand, he ran to the aſſiſtance of his aſs, and in that moment the muſket went off, luckily charged with only one ball, which gave Yaſine a fleſh wound between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand. The boy inſtantly threw down the muſket, which had terrified the hyæna and made him let go the aſs; but he ſtood ready to fight Yaſine, who, not amuſing himſelf with the choice of weapons, gave him ſo rude a blow with the tent-pole upon his head, that it felled him to the ground; others, with pikes, put an end to his life.

We were then obliged to turn our cares towards the wounded. Yaſine's wound was ſoon ſeen to be a trifle; beſides, he was a man not eaſily alarmed on ſuch occaſions. But the poor aſs was not ſo eaſily comforted. The ſtump remained, the tail hanging by a piece of it, which we were obliged to cut off. The next operation was actual cautery; but, as we had made no bread for breakfaſt, our fire had been early out. We, therefore, were obliged to tie the ſtump round with whipcord, till we could get fire enough to heat an iron.

What ſufficiently marked the voracity of theſe beaſts, the hyænas, was, that the bodies of their dead companions, which we hauled a long way from us, and left there, were almoſt entirely eaten by the ſurvivors the next morning; and I then obſerved, for the firſt time, that the hyæna of this country was a different ſpecies from thoſe I had ſeen in Europe, which had been brought from Aſia or America.

CHAP. VII.

Journey over Lamalmon to Gondar.

IT was on account of theſe delays that we did not leave Addergey till near ten o'clock in the forenoon of the 4th of February. We continued our journey along the ſide of a hill, through thick wood and high graſs; then deſcended into a ſteep, narrow valley, the ſides of which had been ſhaded with high trees, but in burning the graſs the trees were conſumed likewiſe; and the ſhoots from the roots were ſome of them above eight feet high ſince the tree had thus ſuffered that ſame year. The river Angueah runs through the middle of this valley; after receiving the ſmall ſtreams, before mentioned, it makes its way into the Tacazzé. It is a very clear, ſwift-running river, ſomething leſs than the Bowiha.

WHEN we had juſt reached the river-ſide, we ſaw the Shum coming from the right hand acroſs us. There were nine horſemen in all, and fourteen or fifteen beggarly footmen. He had a well-dreſſed young man going before him carrying his gun, and had only a whip in his own hand; the reſt had lances in theirs; but none of the horſemen had ſhields. It was univerſally agreed, that this ſeemed to be a party ſet for us, and that he probably had others before appointed to join him, for we were ſure his nine horſe would not venture to do any thing. Upon the firſt appearance, we had ſtopped on this ſide of the river; but Welleta Michael's men, who were to accompany us to Lamalmon, and Janni's ſervant, told us to croſs the river, and make what ſpeed we could, as the Shum's government ended on this ſide.

Our people were now all on foot, and the Moors drove the beaſts before them. I got immediately upon horſeback, when they were then about five hundred yards below, or ſcarcely ſo much. As ſoon as they obſerved us drive our beaſts into the river, one of their horſemen came galloping up, while the others continued at a ſmart walk. When the horſeman was within twenty yards diſtance of me, I called upon him to ſtop, and, as he valued his life, not approach nearer. On this he made no difficulty to obey, but ſeemed rather inclined to turn back. As I ſaw the baggage all laid on the ground at the foot of a ſmall round hill, upon the gentle aſcent of which my ſervants all ſtood armed, I turned about my horſe, and with Yaſine, who was by my ſide, began to croſs the river. The horſeman upon this again advanced; again I cried to him to ſtop. He then pointed behind him, and ſaid, "The Shum!" I deſired him peremptorily to ſtop, or I would fire; upon which he turned round, and the others joining him, they held a minute's counſel together, and came all forward to the river, where they pauſed a moment as if counting our number, and then began to enter the ſtream. Yaſine now cried to them in Amharic, as I had done before in Tigré, deſiring them, as they valued their lives, to come no nearer. They ſtopt, a ſign of no great reſolution; and, after ſome altercation, it was agreed the Shum, and his ſon with the gun, ſhould paſs the river.

The Shum complained violently that we had left Addergey without his leave, and now were attacking him in his own government upon the high-road. "A pretty ſituation," ſaid I, "was ours at Addergey, where the Shum left the king's ſtranger no other alternative but dying with hunger, or being ate by the hyæna."

"This is not your government," ſays Janni's ſervant; "you know my maſter, Ayto Aylo, commands here."—"And who is attacking you on the road?" ſays the Sirè ſervant. "Is it like peaceable people, or banditti, to come mounted on horſeback and armed as you are? Would not your mules and your foot-ſervants have been as proper? and would not you have been better employed, with the king and Ras Michael, fighting the Galla, as you gave your promiſe, than here moleſting paſſengers on the road?"—"You lie," ſays the Shum, "I never promiſed to go with your Ras;" and on this he lifted up his whip to ſtrike Welleta Michael's ſervant; but that fellow, though quiet enough, was not of the kind to be beaten. "By G—d! Shum," ſays he, "offer to ſtrike me again, and I will lay you dead among your horſe's feet, and my maſter will ſay I did well. Never call for your men; you ſhould have taken the red ſlip off your gun before you came from home to-day to follow us. Why, if you was to ſhoot, you would be left alone in our hands, as all your fellows on the other ſide would run at the noiſe even of your own gun.

" Friends, ſaid I, you underſtand one another's grievances better than I do. My only buſineſs here is to get to Lamalmon as ſoon as poſſible. Now, pray, Shum, tell me what is your buſineſs with me? and why have you followed me beyond your government, which is bounded by that river?"—He ſaid, " That I had ſtolen away privately, without paying cuſtom."—" I am no merchant, replied I; I am the king's gueſt, and pay no cuſtom; but as far as a piece of red Surat cotton cloth will content you, I will give it you, and we ſhall part friends."—He then anſwered, " That two ounces of gold were what my dues had been rated at, and would either have that, or he would follow me to Debra Toon."—" Bind him and carry him to Debra Toon, ſays the Siré ſervant, or I ſhall go and bring the Shum of Debra Toon to do it. By the head of Michael, Shum, it ſhall not be long before I take you out of your bed for this."

I now gave orders to my people to load the mules. At hearing this, the Shum made a ſignal for his company to croſs; but Yaſine, who was oppoſite to them, again ordered them to ſtop. " Shum, ſaid I, you intend to follow us, apparently with a deſign to do us ſome harm. Now we are going to Debra Toon, and you are going thither. If you chuſe to go with us, you may in all honour and ſafety; but your ſervants ſhall not be allowed to join you, nor you join them; and if they but attempt to do us harm, we will for certain revenge ourſelves on you. There is a piece

of

of ordnance," continued I, ſhewing him a large blunderbuſs, "a cannon, that will ſweep fifty ſuch fellows as you to eternity in a moment. This ſhall take the care of them, and we ſhall take the care of you; but join you ſhall not till we are at Debra Toon."

The young man that carried the gun, the caſe of which had never been off, deſired leave to ſpeak with his father, as they now began to look upon themſelves as priſoners. The converſation laſted about five minutes; and our baggage was now on the way, when the Shum ſaid, he would make a propoſal:—"Since I had no merchandiſe, and was going to Ras Michael, he would accept of the red cloth, its value being about a crown, provided we ſwore to make no complaint of him at Gondar, nor ſpeak of what had happened at Debra Toon; while he likewiſe would ſwear, after having joined his ſervants, that he would not again paſs that river." Peace was concluded upon theſe terms. I gave him a piece of red Surat cotton cloth, and added ſome cohol, incenſe, and beads for his wives. I gave to the young man that carried the gun two ſtrings of bugles to adorn his legs, for which he ſeemed moſt wonderfully grateful. The Shum returned, not with a very placid countenance; his horſemen joined him in the middle of the ſtream, and away they went ſoberly together, and in ſilence.

Hauza was from this S. E. eight miles diſtant. Its mountains, of ſo many uncommon forms, had a very romantic appearance. At one o'clock we alighted at the foot of one of the higheſt, called Debra Toon, about half way between the mountain and village of that name, which was on the ſide of the hill about a mile N.W. Still further to the N. W.

is a deſert, hilly diſtrict, called Adebarea, the country of the ſlaves, as being the neighbourhood of the Shangalla, the whole country between being waſte and uninhabited.

The mountains of Waldubba, reſembling thoſe of Adebarea, lay north of us about four or five miles. Waldubba, which ſignifies *the Valley of the Hyæna*, is a territory entirely inhabited by the monks, who, for mortification's ſake, have retired to this unwholeſome, hot, and dangerous country, voluntarily to ſpend their lives in penitence, meditation, and prayer. This, too, is the only retreat of great men in diſgrace or in diſguſt. Theſe firſt ſhave their hair, and put on a cowl like the monks, renouncing the world for ſolitude, and taking vows which they reſolve to keep no longer than exigencies require; after which they return to the world again, leaving their cowl and ſanctity in Waldubba.

These monks are held in great veneration; are believed by many to have the gift of prophecy, and ſome of them to work miracles, and are very active inſtruments to ſtir up the people in time of trouble. Thoſe that I have ſeen out of Waldubba in Gondar, and about Koſcam, never ſhewed any great marks of abſtinence; they ate and drank every thing without ſcruple, and in large quantities too. They ſay they live otherwiſe in Waldubba, and perhaps it may be ſo. There are women, alſo, whom we ſhould call Nuns, who, though not reſiding in Waldubba, go at times thither, and live in a familiarity with theſe ſaints, that has very little ſavour of ſpirituality; and many of theſe, who think the living in community with this holy fraternity has not in it perfection enough to ſatisfy their devotion, retire, one of each ſex, a hermit and a nun, ſequeſtering themſelves for months, to eat herbs together in private upon the top of the mountains. Theſe, on their return, are ſhewn as miracles of holineſs,—lean, enervated, and exhauſted. Whether this is wholly to be laid to the charge of the herbs, is more than I will take upon me to decide, never having been at theſe retirements of Waldubba.

VIOLENT fevers perpetually reign there. The inhabitants are all of the colour of a corpſe; and their neighbours, the Shangalla, by conſtant inroads, deſtroy many of them, though lately they have been ſtopped, as they ſay, by the prayers of the monks. I ſuppoſe their partners, the nuns, had their ſhare in it, as both of them are ſaid to be equally ſuperior in holineſs and purity of living to what their predeceſſors formerly were. But, not to derogate from the efficaciouſneſs of their prayers, the *natural cauſe* why the Shangalla moleſt them no more, is the ſmall-pox, which has greatly reduced their ſtrength and number, and extinguiſhed, to a man, whole tribes of them.

THE water is both ſcarce and bad at Debra Toon, there being but one ſpring, or fountain, and it was exceedingly ill-taſted. We did not intend to make this a ſtation; but, having ſent a ſervant to Hauza to buy a mule in room of that which the hyæna had eaten, we were afraid to leave our man, who was not yet come forward, leſt he ſhould fall in with the Shum of Addergey, who might ſtop the mule for our arrears of cuſtoms.

THE pointed mountain of Dagaſhaha continued ſtill viſible; I ſet it this day by the compaſs, and it bore due N.E. We had not ſeen any cultivated ground ſince we paſſed the Tacazzè.

The 5th, at ſeven o'clock in the morning, we left Debra Toon, and came to the edge of a deep valley bordered with wood, the deſcent of which is very ſteep. The Anzo, larger and more rapid than the Angueah, runs through the middle of this valley; its bed is full of large, ſmooth ſtones, and the ſides compoſed of hard rock, and difficult to deſcend; the ſtream is equally clear and rapid with the other. We aſcended the valley on the other ſide, through the moſt difficult road we had met with ſince that of the valley of Sirè. At ten o'clock we found ourſelves in the middle of three villages, two to the right, and one on the left; they are called Adamara, from Adama a mountain, on the eaſt ſide of which is Tchober. At eleven o'clock we encamped at the foot of the mountain Adama, in a ſmall piece of level ground, after paſſing a pleaſant wood of no conſiderable extent. Adama, in Amharic, ſignifies *pleaſant*; and nothing can be more wildly ſo than the view from this ſtation.

Tchober is cloſe at the foot of the mountain, ſurrounded on every ſide, except the north, by a deep valley covered with wood. On the other ſide of this valley are the broken hills which conſtitute the rugged banks of the Anzo. On the point of one of theſe, moſt extravagantly ſhaped, is the village Shahagaanah, projecting as it were over the river; and, behind theſe, the irregular and broken mountains of Salent appear, eſpecially thoſe around Hauza, in forms which European mountains never wear; and ſtill higher, above theſe, is the long ridge of Samen, which run along in an even ſtretch till they are interrupted by the high conical top of Lamalmon, reaching above the clouds, and reckoned to be the higheſt hill in Abyſſinia, over the ſteepeſt part of which, by ſome fatality, the reaſon I do not know, the road of all caravans to Gondar muſt lie.

As ſoon as we paſſed the Anzo, immediately on our right is that part of Waldubba, full of deep valleys and woods, in which the monks uſed to hide themſelves from the incurſions of the Shangalla, before they found out the more convenient defence by the prayers and ſuperior ſanctity of the preſent ſaints. Above this is Adamara, where the Mahometans have conſiderable villages, and, by their populouſneſs and ſtrength, have greatly added to the ſafety of the monks, perhaps not altogether completed yet by the purity of their lives. Still higher than theſe villages is Tchober, where we now encamped.

On the left hand, after paſſing the Anzo, all is Shahagaanah, till you come to the river Zarima. It extends in an eaſt and weſt direction, almoſt parallel to the mountains of Samen, and in this territory are ſeveral conſidérable villages; the people are much addicted to robbery, and rebellion, in which they were engaged at this time. Above Salent is Abbergalè, and above that Tamben, which is one of the principal provinces in Tigrè, commanded at preſent by Kefla Yaſous, an officer of the greateſt merit and reputation in the Abyſſinian army.

On the 6th, at ſix o'clock in the morning, we left Tchober, and paſſed a wood on the ſide of the mountain. At a quarter paſt eight we croſſed the river Zarima, a clear ſtream running over a bottom of ſtones. It is about as large as the Anzo. On the banks of this river, and all this day, we paſſed under trees larger and more beautiful than any we had ſeen ſince leaving the Tacazzé. After having croſſed the Zarima, we entered a narrow defile between two mountains, where ran another rivulet: we continued advancing along the ſide of it, till the valley became ſo narrow as to leave no room but in the bed of the rivulet itſelf. It is called Mai-Agam, or the water or brook of jeſſamin and falls into the Zarima, at a ſmall diſtance from the place wherein we paſſed it. It was dry at the mouth, (the water being there abſorbed and hid under the ſand) but above, where the ground was firmer, there ran a briſk ſtream of excellent water, and it has the appearance of being both broad, deep, and rapid in winter. At ten o'clock we encamped upon its banks, which are here bordered with high trees of cummel, at this time both loaded with fruit and flowers. There are alſo here a variety of other curious trees and plants; in no place, indeed, had we ſeen more, except on the banks of the Tacazzé. Mai-Agam conſiſts of three villages; one, two miles diſtant, eaſt-and-by-north, one at ſame diſtance, N. N. W.; the third at one mile diſtance, S. E. by ſouth.

On the 7th, at ſix o'clock in the morning, we began to aſcend the mountain; at a quarter paſt ſeven the village Lik lay eaſt of us. Muraſs, a country full of low but broken mountains, and deep narrow valleys, bears N. W. and Walkayt in the ſame direction, but farther off. At a quarter paſt eight, Gingerohha, diſtant from us about a mile S. W. it is a village ſituated upon a mountain that joins Lamalmon. Two miles to the N. E. is the village Taguzait on the mountain which we were aſcending. It is called Guza by the Jeſuits, who ſtrangely ſay, that the Alps and Pyreneans are inconſiderable eminences to it. Yet, with all deference to this obſervation, Taguzait, or Guza, though really the baſe of Lamalmon, is not a quarter of a mile high.

Ten minutes before nine o'clock we pitched our tent on a ſmall plain called Dippebaha, on the top of the mountain, above a hundred yards from a ſpring, which ſcarcely was abundant enough to ſupply us with water, in quality as indifferent as it was ſcanty. The plain bore ſtrong marks of the exceſſive heat of the ſun, being full of cracks and chaſms, and the graſs burnt to powder. There are three ſmall villages ſo near each other that they may be ſaid to compoſe one. Near them is the church of St George, on the top of a ſmall hill to the eaſtward, ſurrounded with large trees.

Since paſſing the Tacazzé we had been in a very wild country, left ſo, for what I know, by nature, at leaſt now lately rendered more ſo by being the theatre of civil war. The whole was one wilderneſs without inhabitants, unleſs at Addergey. The plain of Dippebaha had nothing of this appearance; it was full of graſs, and interſperſed with flowering ſhrubs, jeſſamin, and roſes, ſeveral kinds of which were beautiful, but only one fragrant. The air was very freſh and pleaſant; and a great number of people, paſſing to and fro, animated the ſcene.

We met this day ſeveral monks and nuns of Waldubba, I ſhould ſay *pairs*, for they were two and two together. They ſaid they had been at the market of Dobarké on the ſide of Lamalmon, juſt above Dippebaha. Both men and women, but eſpecially the latter, had large burdens of proviſions on their ſhoulders, bought that day, as they ſaid, at Dobarkè, which ſhewed me they did not wholly depend upon the herbs of Waldubba for their ſupport. The women were ſtout and young, and did not ſeem, by their complexion, to have been long in the mortifications of Waldubba. I rather thought that they had the appearance of healthy mountaineers, and were, in all probability, part of the proviſions bought for the convent; and, by the ſample, one would think the monks had the firſt choice of the market, which was but fit, and is a cuſtom obſerved likewiſe in Catholic countries. The men ſeemed very miſerable, and ill-clothed, but had a great air of ferocity and pride in their faces. They are diſtinguiſhed only from the laity by a yellow cowl, or cap, on their head. The cloth they wear round them is likewiſe yellow, but in winter they wear ſkins dyed of the ſame colour.

On the 8th, at three quarters paſt ſix o'clock in the morning, we left Dippebaha, and, at ſeven, had two ſmall villages on our left; one on the S. E. diſtant two miles, the other on the ſouth, one mile off. They are called Wora, and ſo is the territory for ſome ſpace on each ſide of them; but, beyond the valley, all is Shahagaanah to the root of Lamalmon. At a quarter paſt ſeven, the village of Gingerohha was three miles on our right; and we were now aſcending Lamalmon, through a very narrow road, or rather path, for it ſcarcely was two feet wide any where. It was a ſpiral winding up the ſide of the mountain, always on the very brink of a precipice. Torrents of water, which in winter carry prodigious ſtones down the ſide of this mountain, had divided this path into ſeveral places, and opened to us a view of that dreadful abyſs below, which few heads can (mine at leaſt could not) bear to look down upon. We were here obliged to unload our baggage, and, by ſlow degrees, crawl up the hill, carrying them little by little upon our ſhoulders round theſe chaſms where the road was interſected. The mountains grow ſteeper, the paths narrower, and the breaches more frequent as we aſcend. Scarce were our mules, though unloaded, able to ſcramble up, but were perpetually falling; and, to increaſe our difficulties, which, in ſuch caſes, ſeldom come ſingle, a large number of cattle was deſcending, and ſeemed to threaten to puſh us all into the gulf below. After two hours of conſtant toil, at nine o'clock we alighted in a ſmall plain called Kedus, or St Michael, from a church and village of that name, neither beaſt nor man being able to go a ſtep further.

The plain of St Michael, where we now were, is at the foot of a ſteep cliff which terminates the weſt ſide of Lamalmon. It is here perpendicular like a wall, and a few trees only upon the top of the cliff. Over this precipice flow two ſtreams of water, which never are dry, but run in all ſeaſons. They fall into a wood at the bottom of this cliff, and preſerve it in continual verdure all the year, tho' the plain itſelf below, as I have ſaid, is all rent into chaſms, and cracked by the heat of the ſun. Theſe two ſtreams form a conſiderable rivulet in the plain of St Michael, and are a great relief both to men and cattle in this tedious and difficult paſſage over the mountain.

The air on Lamalmon is pleaſant and temperate. We found here our appetite return, with a chearfulneſs, lightneſs of ſpirits, and agility of body, which indicated that our nerves had again reſumed their wonted tone, which they had loſt in the low, poiſonous, and ſultry air on the coaſt of the Red Sea. The ſun here is indeed hot, but in the morning a cool breeze never fails, which increaſes as the ſun riſes high. In the ſhade it is always cool. The thermometer, in the ſhade, in the plain of St Michael, this day, was 76°, wind N. W.

Lamalmon, as I have ſaid, is the paſs through which the road of all caravans to Gondar lies. It is here they take an account of all baggage and merchandiſe, which they tranſmit to the Negadé Ras, or chief officer of the cuſtoms at Gondar, by a man whom they ſend to accompany the caravan. There is alſo a preſent, or awide, due to the private proprietor of the ground; and this is levied with great rigour and violence, and, for the moſt part, with injuſtice; ſo that this ſtation, which, by the eſtabliſhment of the cuſtomhouſe, and nearneſs to the capital, ſhould be in a particular manner attended to by government, is always the place where the firſt robberies and murders are committed in unſettled times. Though we had nothing with us which could be conſidered as ſubject to duty, we ſubmitted every thing to the will of the robber of the place, and gave him his preſent. If he was not ſatiſfied, he ſeemed to be ſo, which was all we wanted.

We had obtained leave to depart early in the morning of the 9th, but it was with great regret we were obliged to abandon our Mahometan friends into hands that ſeemed diſpoſed to ſhew them no favour. The king was in Maitſha, or Damot, that is to ſay, far from Gondar, and various reports were ſpread abroad about the ſucceſs of the campaign; and theſe people only waited for an unfavourable event to make a pretence for robbing our fellow-travellers of every thing they had.

The perſons whoſe right it was to levy theſe contributions were two, a father and ſon; the old man was dreſſed very decently, ſpoke little, but ſmoothly, and had a very good carriage. He profeſſed a violent hatred to all Mahometans, on account of their religion, a ſentiment which ſeemed to promiſe nothing favourable to our friend Yaſine and his companions: but, in the evening, the ſon, who ſeemed to be the active man, came to our tent, and brought us a quantity of bread and bouza, which his father had ordered before. He ſeemed to be much taken with our fire-arms, and was very inquiſitive about them. I gave him every ſort of ſatisfaction, and, little by little, ſaw I might win his heart entirely; which I very much wiſhed to do, that I might free our companions from bondage.

The young man it ſeems was a good ſoldier; and, having been in ſeveral actions under Ras Michael, as a fuſileer, he brought his gun, and inſiſted on ſhooting at marks. I humoured him in this; but as I uſed a rifle, which he did not underſtand, he found himſelf overmatched, eſpecially by the greatneſs of the range, for he ſhot ſtraight enough. I then ſhewed him the manner we ſhot flying, there being quails in abundance, and wild pigeons, of which I killed ſeveral on wing, which left him in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment. Having got on horſeback, I next went through the exerciſe of the Arabs, with a long ſpear and a ſhort javelin. This was more within his comprehenſion, as he had ſeen ſomething like it; but he was wonderfully taken with the fierce and fiery appearance of my horſe, and, at the ſame time, with his docility, the form of his ſaddle, bridle, and accoutrements. He threw at laſt the ſandals off his feet, twiſted his upper garment into his girdle, and ſet off at ſo furious a rate, that I could not help doubting whether he was in his ſober underſtanding.

It was not long till he came back, and with him a man-ſervant carrying a ſheep and a goat, and a woman carrying a jar of honey-wine. I had not yet quitted the horſe; and when I ſaw what his intention was, I put Mirza to a gallop, and, with one of the barrels of the gun, ſhot a pigeon, and immediately fired the other into the ground. There was nothing after this that could have ſurprized him, and it was repeated ſeveral times at his deſire; after which he went into the tent, where he invited himſelf to my houſe at Gondar. There I was to teach him every thing he had ſeen. We now ſwore perpetual friendſhip; and a horn or two of hydromel being emptied, I introduced the caſe of our fellow-travellers, and obtained a promiſe that we ſhould have leave to ſet out together. He would, moreover, take no awide, and ſaid he would be favourable in his report to Gondar.

Matters were ſo far advanced, when a ſervant of Michael's arrived, ſent by Petros, (Janni's brother) who had obtained him from Ozoro Eſther. This put an end to all our difficulties. Our young ſoldier alſo kept his word, and a mere trifle of awide was given, rather by the Moor's own deſire than from demand, and the report of our baggage, and dues thereon, were as low as could be wiſhed. Our friend likewiſe ſent his own ſervant to Gondar with the billet to accompany the caravan. But the news brought by his ſervant were ſtill better than all this. Ras Michael had actually ly beaten Faſil, and forced him to retire to the other ſide of the Nile, and was then in Maitſha, where it was thought he would remain with the army all the rainy ſeaſon. This was juſt what I could have wiſhed, as it brought me at once to the neighbourhood of the ſources of the Nile, without the ſmalleſt ſhadow of fear or danger.

On the 9th of February, at ſeven o'clock, we took leave of the friends whom we had ſo newly acquired at Lamalmon, all of us equally joyful and happy at the news. We began to aſcend what ſtill remained of the mountain, which, though ſteep and full of buſhes, was much leſs difficult than that which we had paſſed. At a quarter paſt ſeven we arrived at the top of Lamalmon, which has, from below, the appearance of being ſharp-pointed. On the contrary, we were much ſurpriſed to find there a large plain, part in paſture, but more bearing grain. It is full of ſprings, and ſeems to be the great reſervoir from whence ariſe moſt of the rivers that water this part of Abyſſinia. A multitude of ſtreams iſſue from the very ſummit in all directions; the ſprings boil out from the earth in large quantities, capable of turning a mill. They plow, ſow, and reap here at all ſeaſons; and the huſbandman muſt blame his own indolence, and not the ſoil, if he has not three harveſts. We ſaw, in one place, people buſy cutting down wheat; immediately next to it, others at the plough; and the adjoining field had green corn in the ear; a little further, it was not an inch above the ground.

Lamalmon is on the N. W. part of the mountains of Samen. That of Gingerohha, with two pointed tops, joins it on the north, and ends theſe mountains here, and is ſeparated from the plain of St Michael by a very deep gully. Neither Lamalmon nor Gingerohha, though higher than the mountains of Tigré, are equal in height to ſome of thoſe of Samen. I take thoſe to the S. E. to be much higher, and, above all, that ſharp-pointed hill Amba Gideon, the preſent reſidence of the governor of Samen, Ayto Tesfos. This is otherwiſe called the *Jews-Rock*, famous in the hiſtory of this country for the many revolts of the Jews againſt the Abyſſinian kings.

The mountain is everywhere ſo ſteep and high, that it is not enough to ſay againſt the will, but without the aſſiſtance of thoſe above, no one from below can venture to aſcend. On the top is a large plain, affording plenty of paſture, as well as room for plowing and ſowing for the maintenance of the army; and there is water, at all ſeaſons, in great plenty, and even fiſh in the ſtreams upon it; ſo that, although the inhabitants of the mountain had been often beſieged for a conſiderable time together, they ſuffered little inconvenience from it, nor ever were taken unleſs by treaſon; except by Chriſtopher de Gama and his Portugueſe, who are ſaid, by their own hiſtorians, to have ſtormed this rock, and put the Mahometan garriſon to the ſword. No mention of this honourable conqueſt is made in the annals of Abyſſinia, though they give the hiſtory of this campaign of Don Chriſtopher in the life of Claudius, or Atzenaf Segued.

On the top of the cliff where we now were, on the left hand of the road to Gondar, we filled a tube with quick-ſilver, and purged it perfectly of outward air; it ſtood this day at 20$\frac{7}{8}$ Engliſh inches. Dagaſhaha bears N. E. by E. from our preſent

ſtation

ſtation upon Lamalmon. The language of Lamalmon is Amharic; but there are many villages where the language of the Falaſha is ſpoken. Theſe are the ancient inhabitants of the mountains, who ſtill preſerve the religion, language, and manners of their anceſtors, and live in villages by themſelves. Their number is now conſiderably diminiſhed, and this has proportionally lowered their power and ſpirit. They are now wholly addicted to agriculture, hewers of wood and carriers of water, and the only potters and maſons in Abyſſinia. In the former profeſſion they excel greatly, and, in general, live better than the other Abyſſinians; which theſe, in revenge, attribute to a ſkill in magic, not to ſuperior induſtry. Their villages are generally ſtrongly ſituated out of the reach of marching armies, otherwiſe they would be conſtantly rifled, partly from hatred, and partly from hopes of finding money.

On the 10th, at half paſt ſeven in the morning, we continued along the plain on the top of Lamalmon; it is called Lama; and a village of the ſame name bore about two miles eaſt from us. At eight o'clock we paſſed two villages called Mocken, one W. by N. at one mile and a half, the other S. E. two miles diſtant. At half paſt eight we croſſed the river Macara, a conſiderable ſtream running with a very great current, which is the boundary between Woggora and Lamalmon. At nine o'clock we encamped at ſome ſmall villages called Macara, under a church named Yaſous. On the 11th of February, by the meridian altitude of the ſun at noon, and that of ſeveral fixed ſtars proper for obſervation, I found the latitude of Macara to be 13° 6′ 8″. The ground was everywhere burnt up; and, though the nights were very cold, we had not obſerved the ſmalleſt dew ſince our firſt aſcending

ing the mountain. The province of Woggora begins at Macara; it is all plain, and reckoned the granary of Gondar on this ſide, although the name would denote no ſuch thing, for Woggora ſignifies the *ſtony*, or *rocky province*.

THE mountains of Laſta and Beleſſen bound our view to the ſouth; the hills of Gondar on the S. W.; and all Woggora lies open before us to the ſouth, covered, as I have ſaid before, with grain. But the wheat of Woggora is not good, owing probably to the height of that province. It makes an indifferent bread, and is much leſs eſteemed than that of Foggora and Dembea, low, flat provinces, ſheltered with hills, that lie upon the ſide of the lake Tzana.

ON the 12th we left Macara at ſeven in the morning, ſtill travelling through the plain of Woggora. At half paſt ſeven ſaw two villages called Erba Tenſa, one of them a mile diſtant, the other half a mile on the N. W. At eight o'clock we came to Woken, five villages not two hundred yards diſtant from one another. At a quarter paſt eight we ſaw five other villages to the S. W. called Warrar, from one to four miles diſtant, all between the points of eaſt and ſouth. The country now grows inconceivably populous; vaſt flocks of cattle of all kinds feed on every ſide, having large and beautiful horns, exceedingly wide, and boſſes upon their backs like camels; their colour is moſtly black.

AT a quarter paſt eight we paſſed Arena, a village on our left. At nine we paſſed the river Girama, which runs N. N. W. and terminates the diſtrict of Lamalmon, beginning that of Giram. At ten the church of St George remained on our right, one mile from us; we croſſed a river called

Shimbra Zuggan, and encamped about two hundred yards from it. The valley of that name is more broken and uneven than any part we had met with ſince we aſcended Lamalmon. The valley called alſo Shimbra Zuggan, is two miles and a half N. by E. on the top of a hill ſurrounded with trees. Two ſmall brooks, the one from S. S. E. the other from S. E. join here, then fall into the rivulet.

The 13th, at ſeven in the morning, we proceeded ſtill along the plain; at half paſt ſeven came to Arradara; and afterwards ſaw above twenty other villages on our right and left, ruined and deſtroyed from the loweſt foundation by Ras Michael in his late march to Gondar. At half paſt eight the church of Mariam was about a hundred yards on our left. At ten we encamped under Tamamo. The country here is full of people; the villages are moſtly ruined, which, in ſome places, they are rebuilding. It is wholly ſown with grain of different kinds, but more eſpecially with wheat. For the production of this, they have everywhere extirpated the wood, and now labour under a great ſcarcity of fuel. Since we paſſed Lamalmon, the only ſubſtitute for this was cows and mules dung, which they gather, make into cakes, and dry in the ſun. From Addergey hither, ſalt is the current money, in large purchaſes, ſuch as ſheep or other cattle; cohol, and pepper, for ſmaller articles, ſuch as flour, butter, fowls, &c. At Shimbra Zuggan they firſt began to inquire after red Surat cotton cloth for which they offered us thirteen bricks of ſalt; four peeks of this red cloth are eſteemed the price of a goat. We began to find the price of proviſions augment in a great proportion as we approached the capital.

This day we met ſeveral caravans going to Tigré, a certain ſign of Michael's victory; alſo vaſt flocks of cattle driven from the rebellious provinces, which were to paſture on Lamalmon, and had been purchaſed from the army. Not only the country was now more cultivated, but the people were cleanlier, better dreſſed, and apparently better fed, than thoſe in the other parts we had left behind us. Indeed, from Shimbra Zuggan hither, there was not a foot, excepting the path on which we trode, that was not ſown with ſome grain or other.

On the 14th, at ſeven o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey. At ten minutes paſt ſeven, we had five villages of Tamamo three miles on our left; our road was through gentle riſing hills, all paſture ground. At half paſt ſeven, the village of Woggora was three miles on our right; and at eight, the church of St George a mile on our left, with a village of the ſame name near it; and, ten minutes after, Angaba Mariam, a church dedicated to the virgin, ſo called from the ſmall territory Angaba, which we are now entering. At fifty minutes paſt eight, we came to five villages called Angaba, at ſmall diſtances from each other. At nine o'clock we came to Koſſogué, and entered a ſmall diſtrict of that name. The church is on a hill ſurrounded with trees. On our left are five villages all called Koſſogué, and as it were on a line, the fartheſt at 3 miles diſtance; near ten we came to the church of Argiff, in the midſt of many ruined villages. Three miles on our left hand are ſeveral others, called Appano.

After having ſuffered, with infinite patience and perſeverance, the hardſhips and danger of this long and painful journey, at forty minutes paſt ten we were gratified, at laſt, with the ſight of Gondar, according to my computation about ten miles diſtant. The king's palace (at leaſt the tower of it) is diſtinctly ſeen, but none of the other houſes, which are covered by the multitude of wanzey-trees growing in the town, ſo that it appears one thick, black wood. Behind it is Azazo, likewiſe covered with trees. On a hill is the large church of Tecla Haimanout, and the river below it makes it diſtinguiſhable; ſtill further on is the great lake Tzana, which terminates our horizon.

At forty-five minutes paſt ten we began to aſcend about two miles through a broken road, having on our right, in the valley below, the river Tchagaſſa; and here begins the territory of that name. At fifty-five minutes paſt ten, deſcending ſtill the hill, we paſſed a large ſpring of water, called Bambola, together with ſeveral plantations of ſugar-canes which grow here *from the ſeed*. At eleven o'clock the village Tchagaſſa was about half a mile diſtant from us on our right, on the other ſide of the river. It is inhabited by Mahometans, as is Waalia, another ſmall one near it. At twelve o'clock we paſſed the river Tchagaſſa over a bridge of three arches, the middle of which is Gothic, the two leſſer Roman. This bridge, though ſmall, is ſolid and well cemented, built with ſtone by order of Facilidas, who probably employed thoſe of his ſubjects who had retained the arts of the Portugueſe, but not their religion.

The Tchagaſſa has very ſteep, rocky banks: It is ſo deep, though narrow, that, without this bridge, it ſcarce would be paſſable. We encamped at a ſmall diſtance from it, but nearer Gondar. Here again we met with trees, (ſmall ones indeed) but the firſt we had ſeen ſince leaving Lamalmon, excepting the uſual groves of cedars. It is the Virginia cedar, or oxy-cedros, in this country called *Arz*, with which their churches are conſtantly ſurrounded.

On the 15th, at ten minutes paſt ſeven, we began to aſcend the mountain; and, at twenty minutes after ſeven, paſſed a village on our left. At ſeven and three quarters we paſſed Tiba and Mariam, two churches, the one on our right, the other on our left, about half a mile diſtant; and near them ſeveral ſmall villages, inhabited by Falaſha, maſons and thatchers of houſes, employed at Gondar. At half paſt eight we came to the village Tocutcho, and, in a quarter of an hour, paſſed the river of that name, and in a few minutes reſted on the river Angrab, about half a mile from Gondar.

Tchagassa is the laſt of the many little diſtricts which, together, compoſe Woggora, generally underſtood to be dependent on Samen, though often, from the turbulent ſpirit of its chiefs, ſtruggling for independency, as at the preſent time, but ſure to pay for it immediately after. In fact, though large, it is too near Gondar to be ſuffered to continue in rebellion; and, being rich and well cultivated, it derives its ſupport from the capital, as being the mart of its produce. It is certainly one of the fruitfuleſt provinces in Abyſſinia, but the inhabitants are miſerably poor, notwithſtanding their threefold harveſts. Whereas, in Egypt, beholden to this country alone for its fertility, one moderate harveſt gives plenty everywhere, Woggora is full of large ants, and prodigious ſwarms of rats and mice, which conſume immenſe quantities of grain; to theſe plagues may be added ſtill one, the greateſt of them all, bad government, which ſpeedily deſtroys all the advantages they reap from nature, climate, and ſituation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Reception at Gondar—Triumphal Entry of the King—The Author's firſt Audience.

WE were much ſurpriſed at arriving on the Angrab, that no perſon had come to us from Petros, Janni's brother. We found afterwards, indeed, that he had taken fright upon ſome menacing words from the prieſts, at hearing a Frank was on his way to Gondar, and that he had, ſoon after, ſet out for Ibaba, where the Ras was, to receive his directions concerning us. This was the moſt diſagreeable accident could have happened to me. I had not a ſingle perſon to whom I could addreſs myſelf for any thing. My letters were for the king and Ras Michael, and could be of no uſe, as both were abſent; and though I had others for Petros and the Greeks, they, too, were out of town.

Many Mahometans came to the Angrab to meet the caravan. They all knew of my coming perfectly, and I ſoon explained my ſituation. I had Janni's letters to Negadé Ras Mahomet, the chief of the Moors at Gondar, and principal merchant in Abyſſinia, who was abſent likewiſe with the army. But one of his brethren, a ſagacious, open-hearted man, deſired me not to be diſcouraged; that, as I had not put off my Mooriſh dreſs, I ſhould continue it; that a houſe was provided for Mahomet Gibberti, and thoſe that were with him, and that he would put me immediately into poſſeſſion of it, where I might ſtay, free from any intercourſe with the prieſts, till Petros or the Ras ſhould return to Gondar. This advice I embraced with great readineſs, as there was nothing I was ſo much afraid of as an encounter with fanatical prieſts before I had obtained ſome protection from government, or the great people in the country. After having concerted theſe meaſures, I reſigned myſelf to the direction of my Mooriſh friend Hagi Saleh.

We moved along the Angrab, having Gondar on our right ſituated upon a hill, and the river on our left, proceeding down till its junction with a ſmaller ſtream, called the Kahha, that joins it at the Mooriſh town. This ſituation, near running water, is always choſen by the Mahometans on account of their frequent ablutions. The Mooriſh town at Gondar may conſiſt of about 3000 houſes, ſome of them ſpacious and good. I was put in poſſeſſion of a very neat one, deſtined for Mahomet Gibberti. Flour, honey, and ſuch-like food, Mahometans and Chriſtians eat promiſcuouſly, and ſo far I was well ſituated. As for fleſh, although there was abundance of it, I could not touch a bit of it, being killed by Mahometans, as that communion would have been looked upon as equal to a renunciation of Chriſtianity.

By Janni's ſervant, who had accompanied us from Adowa, his kind and friendly maſter had wrote to Ayto Aylo, of whom I have already ſpoken. He was the conſtant patron of the Greeks, and had been ſo alſo of all the Catholics who had ventured into this country, and been forced after to leave it. Though no man profeſſed greater veneration for the prieſthood, no one privately deteſted more thoſe of his own country than he did; and he always pretended that, if a proper way of going to Jeruſalem could be found, he would leave his large eſtates, and the rank he had in Abyſſinia, and, with the little money he could muſter, live the remaining part of his days among the monks, of whom he had now accounted himſelf one, in the convent of the holy ſepulchre. This perhaps was, great part of it, imagination; but, as he had talked himſelf into a belief that he was to end his days either at Jeruſalem, which was a pretence, or at Rome, which was his inclination, he willingly took the charge of white people of all communions who had hitherto been unhappy enough to ſtray into Abyſſinia.

It was about ſeven o'clock at night, of the 15th, when Hagi Saleh was much alarmed by a number of armed men at his door; and his ſurpriſe was ſtill greater upon ſeeing Ayto Aylo, who, as far as I know, was never in the Mooriſh town before, deſcend from his mule, and uncover his head and ſhoulders, as if he had been approaching a perſon of the firſt diſtinction. I had been reading the prophet Enoch, which Janni had procured me at Adowa; and Wemmer's and Ludolf's dictionaries were lying upon it. Yaſine was ſitting by me, and was telling me what news he had picked up, and he was well acquainted with Ayto Aylo, from ſeveral commiſſions he had received for his merchants in Arabia. A contention of civilities immediately followed. I offered to ſtand till Aylo was covered, and he would not ſit till I was ſeated. This being got over, the firſt curioſity was, What my books were? and he was very much aſtoniſhed at ſeeing one of them was Abyſſinian, and the European helps that I had towards underſtanding it. He underſtood Tigrè and Amharic perfectly, and had a little knowledge of Arabic, that is, he underſtood it when ſpoken, for he could neither read nor write it, and ſpoke it very ill, being at a loſs for words.

The beginning of our diſcourſe was in Arabic, and embarraſſed enough, but we had plenty of interpreters in all languages. The firſt baſhfulneſs being removed on both ſides, our converſation began in Tigré, now, lately ſince Michael had become Ras, the language moſt uſed in Gondar. Aylo was exceedingly aſtoniſhed at hearing me ſpeak the language as I did, and ſaid after, "The Greeks are poor creatures; Peter does not ſpeak Tigré ſo well as this man." Then, very frequently, to Saleh and the by-ſtanders, "Come, come, he'll do, if he can ſpeak; there is no fear of him, he'll make his way."

He told us that Welled Hawaryat had come from the camp ill of a fever, and that they were afraid it was the ſmall pox: that Janni had informed them I had ſaved many young people's lives at Adowa, by a new manner of treating them; and that the Iteghé deſired I would come the next morning, and that he ſhould carry me to Koſcam and introduce me to her. I told him that I was ready to be directed by his good advice; that the abſence of the Greeks, and Mahomet Gibberti at the ſame time, had very much diſtreſſed me, and eſpecially the apprehenſions of Petros. He ſaid, ſmiling, That neither Petros nor himſelf were bad men, but that unfortunately they were great cowards, and things were not always ſo bad as they apprehended. What had frightened Petros, was a converſation of Abba Salama, whom they met at Koſcam, expreſſing his diſpleaſure with ſome warmth, that a Frank, meaning me, was permitted to come to Gondar. "But," ſays Ayto Aylo, "we ſhall hear to-morrow, or next day. Ras Michael and Abba Salama, are not friends; and if you could do any good to Welled Hawaryat his ſon, I ſhall anſwer for it, one word of his will ſtop the mouths of a hundred Abba Salamas." I will not trouble the reader with much indifferent converſation that paſſed. He drank capillaire and water, and ſat till paſt midnight.

Abba Salama, of whom we ſhall often ſpeak, at that time filled the poſt of Acab Saat, or guardian of the fire. It is the third dignity of the church, and he is the firſt religious officer in the palace. He had a very large revenue, and ſtill a greater influence. He was a man exceedingly rich, and of the very worſt life poſſible; though he had taken the vows of poverty and chaſtity, it was ſaid he had at that time above ſeventy miſtreſſes in Gondar. His way of ſeducing women was as extraordinary as the number ſeduced. It was not by gifts, attendance, or flattery, the uſual means employed on ſuch occaſions; when he had fixed his deſires upon a woman, he forced her to comply, under pain

of

of *excommunication.* He was exceedingly eloquent and bold, a great favourite of the Iteghé's, till taken in to be a counſellor with Lubo and Brulhé. He had been very inſtrumental in the murder of Kaſmati Eſhtè, of which he vaunted, even in the palace of the queen his ſiſter. He was a man of a pleaſing countenance, ſhort, and of a very fair complexion; indifferent, or rather averſe to wine, but a monſtrous glutton, nice in what he had to eat, to a degree ſcarcely before known in Abyſſinia; a mortal enemy to all white people, whom he claſſed under the name of Franks, for which the Greeks, uniting their intereſts at favourable times, had often very nearly overſet him.

THE next morning, about ten o'clock, taking Hagi Saleh and Yaſine with me, and dreſſed in my Mooriſh dreſs, I went to Ayto Aylo, and found him with ſeveral great plates of bread, melted butter, and honey, before him, of one of which he and I ate; the reſt were given to the Moors, and other people preſent. There was with him a prieſt of Koſcam, and we all ſet out for that palace as ſoon as we had finiſhed breakfaſt. The reſt of the company were on mules. I had mounted my own favourite horſe. Aylo, before his fright at Sennaar, was one of the firſt horſemen in Abyſſinia; he was ſhort, of a good figure, and knew the advantage of ſuch make for a horſeman; he had therefore a curioſity to ſee a tall man ride; but he was an abſolute ſtranger to the great advantage of Mooriſh furniture, bridle, ſpurs, and ſtirrups, in the management of a violent, ſtrong, high-mettled horſe; it was with the utmoſt ſatisfaction, when we arrived in the plain called Aylo Meydan, that I ſhewed him the different paces of the horſe. He cried out with fear when he ſaw him ſtand upright upon his legs, and jump forward, or aſide, with all four feet off the ground.

We paſſed the brook of St Raphael, a ſuburb of Gondar, where is the houſe of the Abuna; and upon coming in ſight of the palace of Koſcam, we all uncovered our heads, and rode ſlowly. As Aylo was all-powerful with the Iteghé, indeed her firſt counſellor and friend, our admittance was eaſy and immediate. We alighted, and were ſhewn into a low room in the palace. Ayto Aylo went immediately to the queen to inquire about Welled Hawaryat, and his audience laſted two long hours. He returned to us with theſe news, that Welled Hawaryat was much better, by a medicine a ſaint from Waldubba had given him, which conſiſted in ſome characters written with common ink upon a tin plate, which characters were waſhed off by a medicinal liquor, and then given him to drink. It was agreed, however, that the complaint was the ſmall-pox, and the good it had done him was, he had ate heartily of *brind*, or raw beef after it, tho' he had not ate before ſince his arrival, but called perpetually for drink. Aylo ſaid he was to remain at Koſcam till towards evening, and deſired me to meet him at his own houſe when it turned dark, and to bring Petros with me, if he was returned.

Petros was returned when I arrived, and waited for me at Hagi Saleh's houſe. Although he ſhewed all the ſigns of my being welcome, yet it was eaſy to read in his countenance he had not ſucceeded according to his wiſh in his interview with Michael, or that he had met ſomething that had ruffled and frightened him anew. And, indeed, this laſt was the caſe, for going to the Ras's tent, he had ſeen the ſtuffed ſkin of the unfortunate Wooſheka, with whom he was well acquainted, ſwinging upon a tree, and drying in the wind. He was ſo terrified, and ſtruck with ſuch horror, at the ſight, that he was in a kind of hyſteric fit, cried, ſtarted, laughed hideouſly, and ſeemed as if he had in part loſt his ſenſes.

I WAS ſatisfied by the ſtate I ſaw him in, though he had left Ibaba three days, that, as the firſt ſight of Wooſheka's ſtuffed ſkin muſt have been immediately before he went to the Ras, he could not have had any diſtinct or particular converſation with him on my account; and it turned out after, that he had not ſpoken one word upon the ſubject from fear, but had gone to the tent of Negadé Ras Mahomet, who carried him to Kefla Yaſous; that they, too, ſeeing the fright he was in, and knowing the cauſe, had gone without him to the Ras, and told him of my arrival, and of the behaviour of Abba Salama, and my fear thereupon, and that I was then in the houſe of Hagi Saleh, in the Mooriſh town. The Ras's anſwer was, "Abba Salama is an aſs, and they that fear him are worſe. Do I command in Gondar only when I ſtay there? My dog is of more conſequence in Gondar than Abba Salama." And then, after pauſing a little, he ſaid, "Let Yagoube ſtay where he is in the Moors town: Saleh will let no prieſts trouble him there." Negadé Ras Mahomet laughed, and ſaid, "We will anſwer for that;" and Petros ſet out immediately upon his return, haunted night and day with the ghoſt of his friend Wooſheka, but without having ſeen Ras Michael.

I THOUGHT, when we went at night to Ayto Aylo, and Petros had told the ſtory diſtinctly, that Aylo and he were equally afraid, for he had not, or pretended he had not, till then heard that Wooſheka had been flayed alive. Aylo, too, was well acquainted with the unfortunate perſon, and only ſaid, " This is Eſther, this is Eſther; nobody knew her but I." Then they went on to inquire particulars, and after, they would ſtop one another, and deſire each other to ſpeak no more; then they cried again, and fell into the ſame converſation. It was impoſſible not to laugh at the ridiculous dialogue. " Sirs," ſaid I, " you have told me all I want; I ſhall not ſtir from the Moors town till Ras Michael arrives; if there was any need of advice, you are neither of you capable of giving it; now I would wiſh you would ſhew me you are capable of taking mine. You are both extremely agitated, and Peter is very tired; and will beſides ſee the ghoſt of Wooſheka ſhaking to and fro all night with the wind: neither of you ate ſupper, as I intend to do; and I think Peter ſhould ſtay here all night, but you ſhould not lie both of you in the ſame room, where Wooſheka's black ſkin, ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on your mind, will not fail to keep you talking all night in place of ſleeping. Boil about a quart of gruel, I will put a few drops into it; go then to bed, and this unuſual operation of Michael will not have power to keep you awake."

THE gruel was made, and a good large doze of laudanum put into it. I took my leave, and returned with Saleht but before I went to the door Aylo told me he had forgo- Welled Hawaryat was very bad, and the Iteghé, Ozoro Altaſh, his wife, and Ozoro Eſther, deſired I would come and ſee him to-morrow. One of his daughters, by Ozoro Altaſh, had been ill ſome time before his arrival, and ſhe too was thought in great danger. " Look," ſaid I, " Ayto Aylo, the ſmall-pox is a diſeaſe that will have its courſe; and, during the long time the patient is under it, if people feed them and treat them according to their own ignorant prejudices, my ſeeing him, or adviſing him, is in vain. This morning you ſaid a man had cured him by writing upon a tin plate; and to try if he was well, they crammed him with raw beef, I do not think the letters that he ſwallowed will do him any harm, neither will they do him any good; but I ſhall not be ſurpriſed if the raw beef kills him, and his daughter Welleta Selaſſé, too, before I ſee him to-morrow."

On the morrow Petros was really taken ill, and feveriſh, from a cold and fatigue, and fright. Aylo and I went to Koſcam, and, for a freſh amuſement to him, I ſhewed him the manner in which the Arabs uſe their firelocks on horſeback; but with this advantage of a double-barrelled gun, which he had never before ſeen. I ſhot alſo ſeveral birds from the horſe; all which things he would have pronounced impoſſible if they had been only told him. He arrived at Koſcam full of wonder, and ready to believe I was capable of doing every thing I undertook.

We were juſt entering into the palace-door, when we ſaw a large proceſſion of monks, with the prieſts of Koſcam at their head, a large croſs and a picture carried with them, the laſt in a very dirty, gilt frame. Aylo turned aſide when he ſaw theſe; and, going into the chamberlain's apartment, called Ayto Heikel, afterwards a great friend and companion of mine. He informed us, that three great ſaints from Waldubba, one of whom had neither ate nor drank for twenty years of his life, had promiſed to come and cure Welled Hawaryat, by laying a picture of the Virgin Mary and the croſs upon him, and therefore they would not wiſh me to be ſeen, or meddle in the affair. "I aſſure you, Ayto Aylo," ſaid I, "I ſhall ſtrictly obey you. There is no ſort of reaſon for my meddling in this affair with ſuch aſſociates. If they can cure him by a miracle, I am ſure it is the eaſieſt kind of cure of any, and will not do his conſtitution the leaſt harm afterwards, which is more than I will promiſe for medicines in general; but, remember what I ſay to you, it will, indeed, be a miracle, if both the father and the daughter are not dead before to-morrow night." We ſeemed all of us ſatisfied in one point, that it was better he ſhould die, than I come to trouble by interfering.

After the proceſſion was gone, Aylo went to the Iteghé, and, I ſuppoſe, told her all that happened ſince he had ſeen her laſt. I was called in, and, as uſual, proſtrated myſelf upon the ground. She received that token of reſpect without offering to excuſe or to decline it. Aylo then ſaid, "This is our gracious miſtreſs, who always gives us her aſſiſtance and protection. You may ſafely ſay before her whatever is in your heart."

Our firſt diſcourſe was about Jeruſalem, the Holy Sepulchre, Calvary, the City of David, and the Mountain of Olives, with the ſituations of which ſhe was perfectly well acquainted. She then aſked me to tell her truly if I was not a Frank? "Madam," ſaid I, "If I was a Catholic, which you mean by Frank, there could be no greater folly than my concealing this from you in the beginning, after the aſſurance Ayto Aylo has juſt now given; and, in confirmation of the truth I am now telling, (ſhe had a large bible lying on the table before her, upon which I laid my hand), I declare to you, by all thoſe truths contained in this book, that my religion is more different from the Catholic religion than your's is: that there has been more blood ſhed between the Catholics and us, on account of the difference of religion, than ever was between you and the Catholics in this country; even at this day, when men are become wiſer and cooler in many parts of the world, it would be full as ſafe for a Jeſuit to preach in the market-place of Gondar, as for any prieſt of my religion to preſent himſelf as a teacher in the moſt civilized of Frank or Catholic countries."—"How is it then," ſays ſhe, "that you don't believe in miracles?"

"I ſee, Madam," ſaid I, "Ayto Aylo has informed you of a few words that ſome time ago dropt from me. I do certainly believe the miracles of Chriſt and his apoſtles, otherwiſe I am no Chriſtian; but I do not believe theſe miracles of latter times, wrought upon trifling occaſions, like ſports, and jugglers tricks."—"And yet," ſays ſhe, "our books are full of them."—"I know they are," ſaid I, "and ſo are thoſe of the Catholics: but I never can believe that a ſaint converted the devil, who lived, forty years after, a holy life as a monk; nor the ſtory of another ſaint, who, being ſick and hungry, cauſed a brace of partridges, ready-roaſted, to fly upon his plate that he might eat them."—"He has been reading the Synaxar," ſays Ayto Aylo. "I believe ſo," ſays ſhe, ſmiling; "but is there any harm in believing too much, and is not there great danger in believing too little?—"Certainly," continued I; "but what I meant to ſay to Ayto Aylo was, that I did not believe laying a picture upon Welled Hawaryat would recover him when delirious in a fever." She anſwered, "There was nothing impoſſible with God." I made a bow of aſſent, wiſhing heartily the converſation might end there.

I RETURNED to the Moors town, leaving Aylo with the queen. In the afternoon I heard Welleta Selaſſé was dead; and at night died her father, Welled Hawaryat. The contagion from Maſuah and Adowa had ſpread itſelf all over Gondar. Ozoro Ayabdar, daughter of Ozoro Altaſh, was now ſick, and a violent fever had fallen upon Koſcam. The next morning Aylo came to me and told me, the faith in the ſaint who did not eat or drink for twenty years was perfectly abandoned ſince Welled Hawaryat's death: That it was the deſire of the queen, and Ozoro Eſther, that I ſhould tranſport myſelf to Koſcam to the Iteghé's palace, where all their children and grandchildren, by the different men the queen's daughters had married, were under her care. I told him, "I had ſome difficulty to obey them, from the poſitive orders I had received from Petros to ſtay in the Moors town with Hagi Saleh till the Ras ſhould arrive; that Koſcam was full of prieſts, and Abba Salama there every day; notwithſtanding which, if Petros and he ſo adviſed me, I would certainly go to do any poſſible ſervice to the Iteghé, or Ozoro Eſther."

HE deſired half an hour's abſence before he gave me an anſwer, but did not return till about three hours afterwards, and, without alighting, cried out at ſome diſtance, "Aya, come, you muſt go immediately." "I told him, that new and clean clothes in the Gondar faſhion had been procured for me by Petros, and that I wiſhed they might be ſent to his houſe, where I would put them on, and then go to Koſcam, with a certainty that I carried no infection with me, for I had attended a number of Mooriſh children, while at Hagi Saleh's houſe, moſt of whom happily went on doing well, but that there was no doubt there would be infection in my clothes." He praiſed me up to the ſkies for this precaution, and the whole was executed in the manner propoſed. My hair was cut round, curled, and perfumed, in the Amharic faſhion, and I was thenceforward, in all outward appearance, a perfect Abyſſinian.

My firſt advice, when arrived at Koſcam, was, that Ozoro Eſther, and her ſon by Mariam Barea, and a ſon by Ras Michael, ſhould remove from the palace, and take up their lodging in a houſe formerly belonging to her uncle Baſha Euſebius, and give the part of the family that were yet well a chance of eſcaping the diſeaſe. Her young ſon by Mariam Barea, however, complaining, the Iteghè would not ſuffer him to remove, and the reſolution was taken to abide the iſſue all in the palace together.

Before I entered upon my charge, I deſired Petros (now recovered) Aylo, Abba Chriſtophorus, a Greek prieſt who acted as phyſician before I came to Gondar, and Armaxikos prieſt of Koſcam, and favourite of the Iteghè, to be all preſent. I ſtated to them the diſagreeable taſk now impoſed upon me, a ſtranger without acquaintance or protection, having the language but imperfectly, and without power or controul among them. I profeſſed my intention of doing my utmoſt, although the diſeaſe was much more ſerious and fatal in this country than in mine, but I inſiſted one condition ſhould be granted me, which was, that no directions as to regimen or management, even of the moſt trifling kind, as they might think, ſhould be ſuffered, without my permiſſion and ſuperintendence, otherwiſe I waſhed my hands of the conſequence, which I told before them would be fatal. They all aſſented to this, and Armaxikos declared thoſe excommunicated that broke this promiſe; and I ſaw that, the more ſcrupulous and particular I was, the more the confidence of the ladies increaſed. Armaxikos promiſed me the aſſiſtance of his prayers, and thoſe of the whole monks, morning and evening; and Aylo ſaid lowly to me, "You'll have no objection to this ſaint, I aſſure you he eats and drinks heartily, as I ſhall ſhew you when once theſe troubles are over."

I SET the ſervants all to work. There were apartments enough. I opened all the doors and windows, fumigating them with incenſe and myrrh, in abundance, waſhed them with warm water and vinegar, and adhered ſtrictly to the rules which my worthy and ſkilful friend Doctor Ruſſel had given me at Aleppo.

THE common and fatal regimen in this country, and in moſt parts in the eaſt, has been to keep their patient from feeling the ſmalleſt breath of air; hot drink, a fire, and a quantity of covering are added in Abyſſinia, and the doors ſhut ſo cloſe as even to keep the room in darkneſs, whilſt this heat is further augmented by the conſtant burning of candles.

AYABDAR, Ozoro Altaſh's remaining daughter, and the ſon of Mariam Barea, were both taken ill at the ſame time, and happily recovered. A daughter of Kaſmati Boro, by a daughter of Kaſmati Eſhtès, died, and her mother, though ſhe ſurvived, was a long time ill afterwards. Ayabdar was very much marked, ſo was Mariam Barea's ſon.

AT this time, Ayto Confu, ſon of Kaſmati Netcho by Ozoro Eſther, had arrived from Tcherkin, a lad of very

great

great hopes, though not then fourteen. He came to ſee his mother without my knowledge or her's, and was infected likewiſe. Laſt of all the infant child of Michael, the child of his old age, took the diſeaſe, and though the weakeſt of all the children, recovered beſt. I tell theſe actions for brevity's ſake altogether, not directly in the order they happened, to ſatisfy the reader about the reaſon of the remarkable attention and favour ſhewed to me afterwards upon ſo ſhort an acquaintance.

The fear and anxiety of Ozoro Eſther, upon ſmaller occaſions, was exceſſive, and fully in proportion in the greater that now exiſted; many promiſes of Michael's favour, of riches, greatneſs, and protection, followed every inſtance of my care and attention towards my patients. She did not eat or ſleep herſelf; and the ends of her fingers were all broke out into puſtules, from touching the ſeveral ſick perſons. Confu, the favourite of all the queen's relations, and the hopes of their family, had ſymptoms which all feared would be fatal, as he had violent convulſions, which were looked upon as forerunners of immediate death; they ceaſed, however, immediately on the eruption. The attention I ſhewed to this young man, which was more than overpaid by the return he himſelf made on many occaſions afterwards, was greatly owing to a prepoſſeſſion in his favour, which I took upon his firſt appearance. Policy, as may be imagined, as well as charity, alike influenced me in the care of my other patients; but an attachment, which providence ſeemed to have inſpired me with for my own preſervation, had the greateſt ſhare in my care for Ayto Confu.

Though it is not the place, I muſt not forget to tell the reader, that, the third day after I had come to Koſcam, a horſeman and a letter had arrived from Michael to Hagi Saleh, ordering him to carry me to Koſcam, and likewiſe a ſhort letter written to me by Negadè Ras Mahomet, in Arabic, as from Ras Michael, very civil, but containing poſitive orders and *command*, as if to a ſervant, that I ſhould repair to the Iteghè's palace, and not ſtir from thence till future orders, upon any pretence whatever.

I cannot ſay but this poſitive, peremptory dealing, did very much ſhock and diſpleaſe me. I ſhewed the letter to Petros, who approved of it much; ſaid he was glad to ſee it in that ſtile, as it was a ſign the Ras was in earneſt. I ſhewed it to Ayto Aylo, who ſaid not much to it either the one way or the other, only he was glad that I had gone to Koſcam before it came; but he taxed Ozoro Eſther with being the cauſe of a proceeding which might have been proper to a Greek or ſlave, but was not ſo to a free man like me, who came recommended to their protection, and had, as yet, received no favour, or even civility. Ozoro Eſther laughed heartily at all this, for the firſt time ſhe had ſhewn any inclination to mirth; ſhe confeſſed ſhe had ſent a meſſenger every day, ſometimes two, and ſometimes three, ever ſince Welled Hawaryat had died, and by every one of them ſhe had preſſed the Ras to enjoin me not to leave Koſcam, the conſequence of which was the order above mentioned; and, in the evening, there was a letter to Petros from Anthulé, Janni's ſon-in-law, a Greek, and treaſurer to the king, pretty much to the ſame purpoſe as the firſt, and in no ſofter terms, with direction, however, to furniſh me with every thing I ſhould want, on the king's account.

One morning Aylo, in preſence of the queen, ſpeaking to Ozoro Eſther of the ſtile of the Ras's letter to me, ſhe confeſſed her own anxiety was the cauſe, but added, "You have often upbraided me with being, what you call, an unchriſtian enemy, in the advices you ſuppoſe I frequently give Michael; but now, if I am not as good a friend to Yagoube, who has ſaved my children, as I am a ſteady enemy to the Galla, who murdered my huſband, ſay then Eſther is not a Chriſtian, and I forgive you." Many converſations of this kind paſſed between her and me, during the illneſs of Ayto Confu. I removed my bed to the outer door of Confu's chamber, to be ready whenever he ſhould call, but his mother's anxiety kept her awake in his room all night, and propriety did not permit me to go to bed. From this frequent communication began a friendſhip between Ozoro Eſther and me, which ever after ſubſiſted without any interruption.

Our patients, being all likely to do well, were removed to a large houſe of Kaſmati Eſhtè, which ſtood ſtill within the boundaries of Koſcam, while the rooms underwent another luſtration and fumigation, after which they all returned; and I got, as my fee, a preſent of the neat and convenient houſe formerly belonging to Baſha Euſebius, which had a ſeparate entry, without going through the palace. Still I thought it better to obey Ras Michael's orders to the letter, and not ſtir out of Koſcam, not even to Hagi Saleh's or Ayto Aylo's, though both of them frequently endeavoured to perſuade me that the order had no ſuch ſtrict meaning. But my ſolitude was in no way diſagreeable to me. I had a great deal to do. I mounted my inſtruments, my thermometer and barometer, teleſcopes and quadrant.

Again all was wonder. It occaſioned me many idle hours before the curioſity of the palace was ſatisfied. I ſaw the queen once every day at her levee, ſometimes in the evening, where many prieſts were always preſent. I was, for the moſt part, twice a-day, morning and evening, with Ozoro Eſther, where I ſeldom met with any.

One day, when I went early to the queen, that I might get away in time, having ſome other engagements about noon, juſt as I was taking my leave, in came Abba Salama. At firſt he did not know me from the change of dreſs; but, ſoon after recollecting me, he ſaid, as it were, paſſing, "Are you here? I thought you was with Ras Michael." I made him no anſwer, but bowed, and took my leave, when he called out, with an air of authority, Come back, and beckoned me with his hand.

Several people entered the room at that inſtant, and I ſtood ſtill in the ſame place where I was, ready to receive the Iteghé's orders: ſhe ſaid, "Come back, and ſpeak to Abba Salama." I then advanced a few paces forward, and ſaid, looking to the Iteghé, "What has Abba Salama to ſay to me?" He began directing his diſcourſe to the queen, "Is he a prieſt? Is he a prieſt?" The Iteghè anſwered very gravely, "Every good man is a prieſt to himſelf; in that ſenſe, and no other, Yagoube is a prieſt."—"Will you anſwer a queſtion that I will aſk you?" ſays he to me, with a very pert tone of voice. "I do not know but I may, if it is a diſcreet one," ſaid I, in Tigrè. "Why don't you ſpeak Amharic?" ſays he to me in great haſte, or ſeeming impatience. "Becauſe I cannot ſpeak it well," ſaid I. "Why don't you, on the other hand, ſpeak Tigré to me? it is the language the holy ſcriptures are written in, and you, a prieſt, ſhould underſtand it."—"That is Geez," ſays he; "I underſtand it, though I don't ſpeak it."—"Then," replied I, "Ayto Heikel," the queen's chamberlain, who ſtood behind me, "ſhall interpret for us; he underſtands all languages."

"Ask him, Heikel," ſays he, "how many Natures there are in Chriſt." Which being repeated to me, I ſaid, "I thought the queſtion to be put was ſomething relating to my country, travels, or profeſſion, in which I poſſibly could inſtruct him; and not belonging to his, in which he ſhould inſtruct me. I am a phyſician in the town, a horſeman and ſoldier in the field. Phyſic is my ſtudy in the one, and managing my horſe and arms in the other. This I was bred to; as for diſputes and matters of religion, they are the province of prieſts and ſchoolmen. I profeſs myſelf much more ignorant in theſe than I ought to be. Therefore, when I have doubts I propoſe them to ſome holy man like you, Abba Salama, (he bowed for the firſt time) whoſe profeſſion theſe things are. He gives me a rule and I implicitly follow it." "Truth! truth!" ſays he; "by St Michael, prince of angels, that is right; it is anſwered well; by St George! he is a clever fellow. They told me he was a Jeſuit. Will you come to ſee me? Will you come to ſee me? You need not be afraid when you come to *me*." "I truſt," ſaid I, bowing, "I ſhall do no ill, in that caſe ſhall have no reaſon to fear." Upon this I withdrew from among the crowd, and went away, as an expreſs then arrived from Ras Michael.

It was on the 8th or 9th of March I met him at Azazo. He was dreſſed in a coarſe dirty cloth, wrapt about him like a blanket, and another like a table-cloth folded about his head: He was lean, old, and apparently much fatigued; ſat ſtooping upon an excellent mule, that carried him ſpeedily without ſhaking him; he had alſo ſore eyes. As we ſaw the place where he was to light by four croſs lances, and a cloth thrown over them like a temporary tent, upon an eminence, we did not ſpeak to him till he alighted. Petros and the Greek prieſt, beſides ſervants, were the only people with me, Francis * had joined us upon our meeting the Ras.

We alighted at the ſame time he did, and afterwards, with anxiety enough we deputed the Greek prieſt, who was a friend of Michael, to tell him who I was, and that I was come to meet him. The ſoldiers made way, and I came up, took him by the hand, and kiſſed it. He looked me broad in the face for a ſecond, repeated the ordinary ſalutation in Tigrè. "How do you do? I hope you are well;" and pointed to a place where I was to ſit down. A thouſand complaints, and a thouſand orders came immediately before him, from a thouſand mouths, and we were nearly ſmothered; but he took no notice of me, nor did he aſk for one of his family. In ſome minutes after came the king, who paſſed at ſome diſtance to the left of him; and Michael was then led out of the ſhelter of his tent to the door, where he was ſupported on foot till the king paſſed by, having firſt pulled off the towel that was upon his head, after which he returned to his ſeat in the tent again.

---

* A man much attached to Michael, and had been preferred by him to many commands, and conſequently was the only Greek that could be called a good ſoldier.

The king had been paſt about a quarter of a mile, when Keſla Yaſous came from him with orders to the Ras, or rather, as I believe, to receive orders from him. He brought with him a young nobleman, Ayto Engedan, who, by his dreſs, having his upper garment twiſted in a particular manner about his waiſt, ſhewed that he was carrier of a ſpecial meſſage from the king. The crowd by this time had ſhut us quite out, and made a circle round the Ras, in which we were not included. We were upon the point of going away, when Keſla Yaſous, who had ſeen Francis, ſaid to him, "I think Engedan has the king's command for you, you muſt not depart without leave." And, ſoon after, we underſtood that the king's orders were to obtain leave from the Ras, to bring me, with Engedan, near, and in ſight of him, without letting me know, or introducing me to him. In anſwer to this, the Ras had ſaid, "I dont know him; will people like him think this right? Aſk Petros; or why ſhould not the king call upon him and ſpeak to him; he has letters to him as well as to me, and he will be obliged to ſee him to-morrow."

Engedan went away on a gallop to join the king, and we proceeded after him, nor did we receive any other meſſage either from the king or the Ras. We returned to Koſcam, very little pleaſed with the reception we had met with. All the town was in a hurry and confuſion; 30,000 men were encamped upon the Kahha; and the firſt horrid ſcene Michael exhibited there, was cauſing the eyes of twelve of the chiefs of the Galla, whom he had taken priſoners, to be pulled out, and the unfortunate ſufferers turned out to the fields, to be devoured at night by the hyæna. Two of theſe

I took under my care, who both recovered, and from them I learned many particulars of their country and manners.

The next day, which was the 10th, the army marched into the town in triumph, and the Ras at the head of the troops of Tigrè. He was bareheaded; over his ſhoulders, and down to his back, hung a pallium, or cloak, of black velvet, with a ſilver fringe. A boy, by his right ſtirrup, held a ſilver wand of about five feet and a half long, much like the ſtaves of our great officers at court. Behind him all the ſoldiers, who had ſlain an enemy and taken the ſpoils from them, had their lances and firelocks ornamented with ſmall ſhreds of ſcarlet cloth, one piece for every man he had ſlain.

Remarkable among all this multitude was Hagos, door-keeper of the Ras, whom we have mentioned in the war of Begemder. This man, always well-armed and well-mounted, had followed the wars of the Ras from his infancy, and had been ſo fortunate in this kind of ſingle combat, that his whole lance and javelin, horſe and perſon, were covered over with the ſhreds of ſcarlet cloth. At this laſt battle of Fagitta, Hagos is ſaid to have ſlain eleven men with his own hand. Indeed there is nothing more fallacious than judging of a man's courage by theſe marks of conqueſts. A good horſeman, armed with a coat of mail, upon a ſtrong, well-fed, well-winded horſe, may, after a defeat, kill as many of theſe wretched, weary, naked fugitives, as he pleaſes, confining himſelf to thoſe that are weakly, mounted upon tired horſes, and covered only with goat's-ſkins, or that are flying on foot.

BEHIND came Guſho of Amhara, and Powuſſen, lately made governor of Begemder for his behaviour at the battle of Fagitta, where, as I have ſaid, he purſued Faſil and his army for two days. The Ras had given him alſo a farther reward, his grand-daughter Ayabdar, lately recovered from the ſmall-pox, and the only one of my patients that, neither by herſelf, her mother, nor her huſband, ever made me the leaſt return. Powuſſen was one of the twelve officers who, after being delivered to Lubo by the Galla, together with Mariam Barea, had fled to Michael's tent, and were protected by him.

ONE thing remarkable in this cavalcade, which I obſerved, was the head-dreſs of the governors of provinces. A large broad fillet was bound upon their forehead, and tied behind their head. In the middle of this was a horn, or a conical piece of ſilver, gilt, about four inches long, much in the ſhape of our common candle extinguiſhers. This is called *kirn*, or horn, and is only worn in reviews or parades after victory. This I apprehend, like all other of their uſages, is taken from the Hebrews, and the ſeveral alluſions made in ſcripture to it ariſe from this practice:—“ I ſaid unto fools, Deal not fooliſhly ; and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn—“ Lift not up your horn on high ; ſpeak not with a ſtiff neck[*]”—“ For promotion cometh,” &c.—“ But my horn ſhalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn”—“ And the horn of the righteous ſhall be exalted with honour." And ſo in many other places throughout the Pſalms.

---

[*] The crooked manner in which they hold their neck when this ornament is on their forehead, for fear it ſhould fall forward, perfectly ſhews the meaning of ſpeaking with a ſtiff neck when you hold the horn on high, or erect like the horn of the unicorn.

Next to theſe came the king, with a fillet of white muſlin about three inches broad, binding his forehead, tied with a large double knot behind, and hanging down about two feet on his back. About him were the great officers of ſtate, ſuch of the young nobility as were without command; and after theſe, the houſehold troops.

Then followed the Kanitz Kitzera, or executioner of the camp, and his attendants; and, laſt of all, amidſt the King's and the Ras's baggage, came a man bearing the ſtuffed ſkin of the unfortunate Wooſheka upon a pole, which he hung upon a branch of the tree before the king's palace appropriated for public executions.

Upon their arrival at Gondar, all the great men had waited both upon the Ras and the King. Aylo had been with them, and Ozoro Eſther was removed to Gondar; but, by my advice, had left the child at Koſcam. Her ſon Confu, though recovered of the ſmall-pox, had evident ſigns of a dyſentery, and took no care of himſelf in point of regimen, or avoiding cold.

It was now the 13th of March, and I had heard no word from Ozoro Eſther, or the Ras, though removed to a houſe in Gondar near to Petros. I had gone every day once to ſee the children of Koſcam; at all which times I had been received with the greateſt cordiality and marks of kindneſs by the Iteghé, and orders given for my free admittance upon all occaſions like an officer of her houſehold. As to the reſt, I never

I never was in appearance more neglected, than in this preſent moment, by all but the Moors. Theſe were very grateful for the ſucceſsful attention I had ſhewed their children, and very deſirous to have me again among them. Hagi Saleh, in particular, could not ſatiate himſelf with curſing the ingratitude of theſe cafers, and infidels, the Chriſtians. He knew what had paſſed at Koſcam, he ſaw what he thought likely to happen now, and his anger was that of an honeſt man, and which perhaps many former inſtances which he had been witneſs of might have juſtified, but in the preſent one he was miſtaken.

In the evening, Negadè Ras Mahoment came to my houſe; he ſaid Mahomet Gibberti was arrived, had been twice on private buſineſs with the Ras, but had not yet delivered him his preſents; and he had not informed me of this, as he thought I was ſtill at Koſcam, and that Saleh his brother knew nothing of it, as he had not ſeen him ſince he came home. He alſo informed me that Ayto Aylo was with the Ras twice the day after he entered Gondar, and once with Mahomet Gibberti: all this was about me; and that, at Ayto Aylo's propoſal, it was agreed that I ſhould be appointed Palambaras, which is maſter of the king's horſe. It is a very great office, both for rank, and revenue, but has no buſineſs attending it; the young Armenian had before enjoyed it. I told Mahomet, that, far from being any kindneſs to me, this would make me the moſt unhappy of all creatures; that my extreme deſire was to ſee the country, and its different natural productions; to converſe with the people as a ſtranger, but to be nobody's maſter nor ſervant; to ſee their books; and, above all, to viſit the ſources of the Nile; to live as privately in my own houſe, and have as much time to myſelf as poſſible; and what I was moſt anxious about at preſent, was to know when it would be convenient for them to admit me to ſee the Ras, and deliver my letters as a ſtranger.

Mahomet went away, and returned, bringing Mahomet Gibberti, who told me, that, beſides the letter I carried to Ras Michael from Metical Aga his maſter, he had been charged with a particular one, out of the ordinary form, dictated by the Engliſh at Jidda, who, all of them, and particularly my friends Captain Thornhill, and Capt. Thomas Price of the Lyon, had agreed to make a point with Metical Aga, devoted to them for his own profit, that his utmoſt exertion of friendſhip and intereſt, ſhould be ſo employed in my recommendation, as to engage the attention of Ras Michael to provide in earneſt for my ſafety and ſatisfaction in every point.

This letter I had myſelf read at Jidda; it informed Michael of the power and riches of our nation, and that they were abſolute maſters of the trade on the Red Sea, and ſtrictly connected with the Sherriffe, and in a very particular manner with him, Metical Aga; that any accident happening to me would be an infamy and diſgrace to him, and worſe than death itſelf, becauſe, that knowing Michael's power, and relying on his friendſhip, he had become ſecurity for my ſafety, after I arrived in his hands; that I was a man of conſideration in my own country, ſervant to the king of it, who, though himſelf a Chriſtian, governed his ſubjects Muſſulmen and Pagans, with the ſame impartiality and juſtice as he did Chriſtians. That all my deſire was to examine ſprings and rivers, trees and flowers, and the ſtars in the heavens, from which I drew knowledge very uſeful to preſerve man's health and life; that I was no merchant, and had no dealings whatever in any ſort of mercantile matters; and that I had no need of any man's money, as he had told Mahomet Gibberti to provide for any call I might have in that country, and for which he would anſwer, let the ſum be what it would, as he had the word of my countrymen to repay it, which he conſidered better than the written ſecurity of any other people in the world. He then repeated very nearly the ſame words uſed in the beginning of the letter; and, upon this particular requeſt, Metical Aga had ſent him a diſtinct preſent, not to confound it with other political and commercial affairs, in which they were concerned together.

UPON reading this letter, Michael exclaimed, "Metical Aga does not know the ſituation of this country. Safety! where is that to be found? I am obliged to fight for my own life every day. Will Metical call this ſafety? Who knows, at this moment, if the king is in ſafety, or how long I ſhall be ſo? All I can do is to keep him with me. If I loſe my own life, and the king's, Metical Aga can never think it was in my power to preſerve that of his ſtranger."—"No, no," ſays Ayto Aylo, who was then preſent, "you don't know the man; he is a devil on horſeback; he rides better, and ſhoots better, than any man that ever came into Abyſſinia; loſe no time, put him about the king, and there is no fear of him. He is very ſober and religious; he will do the king good. "Shoot!" ſays Michael, "he won't ſhoot at me as the Armenian did; will he? will he?" "Oh," continued Aylo, "you know theſe days are over. What is the Armenian? a boy, a ſlave to the Turk. When you ſee this man, you'll not think of the Armenian." It was finally agreed, that the letters the Greeks had received ſhould be read to the king; that the letters I had from Metical Aga to the Ras ſhould be given to Mahomet Gibberti, and that I ſhould be introduced to the King and the Ras immediately after they were ready.

The reader may remember that, when I was at Cairo, I obtained letters from Mark, the Greek patriarch, to the Greeks at Gondar; and particularly one, in form of a bull, or reſcript, to all the Greeks in Abyſſinia. In this, after a great deal of paſtoral admonition, the patriarch ſaid, that, knowing their propenſity to lying and vanity, and not being at hand to impoſe proper penances upon them for theſe ſins, he exacted from them, as a proof of their obedience, that they would, with a good grace, undergo this mortification, than which there could be no gentler impoſed, as it was only to ſpeak the truth. He ordered them in a body to go to the king, in the manner and time they knew beſt, and to inform him that I was not to be confounded with the reſt of white men, ſuch as Greeks, who were all ſubject to the Turks, and ſlaves; but that I was a free man, of a free nation; and the beſt of them would be happy in being my ſervant, as one of their brethren, Michael, then actually was. I will not ſay but this was a bitter pill; for they were high in office, all except Petros, who had declined all employment after the murder of Joas his maſter, whoſe chamberlain he was. The order of the patriarch, however, was fairly and punctually performed; Petros was their ſpokeſman; he was originally a ſhoemaker at Rhodes, clever, and handſome in his perſon, but a great coward, though, on ſuch an occaſion as the preſent, forward and capable enough.

I THINK it was about the 14th that theſe letters were to be all read. I expected at the ordinary hour, about five in the afternoon, to be ſent for, and had rode out to Koſcam with Ayto Heikel, the queen's chamberlain, to ſee the child, who was pretty well recovered of all its complaints, but very weak. In the interim I was ſent for to the Ras, with orders to diſpatch a man with the king's preſent, to wait for me at the palace, whither I was to go after leaving Michael. It was anſwered, That I was at Koſcam, and the errand I had gone on mentioned; which diſappointment, and the cauſe, did no way prejudice me with the Ras. Five in the evening was fixed as the hour, and notice ſent to Koſcam. I came a little before the time, and met Ayto Aylo at the door. He ſqueezed me by the hand, and ſaid, "Refuſe nothing, it can be all altered afterwards; but it is very neceſſary, on account of the prieſts and the populace, you have a place of ſome authority, otherwiſe you will be robbed and murdered the firſt time you go half a mile from home: fifty people have told me you have cheſts filled with gold, and that you can make gold, or bring what quantity you pleaſe from the Indies; and the reaſon of all this is, becauſe you refuſed the queen and Ozoro Eſther's offer of gold at Koſcam, and which you muſt never do again."

WE went in and ſaw the old man ſitting upon a ſofa; his white hair was dreſſed in many ſhort curls. He appeared to be thoughtful, but not diſpleaſed; his face was lean, his eyes quick and vivid, but ſeemed to be a little ſore from expoſure to the weather. He ſeemed to be about ſix feet high, though his lameneſs made it difficult to gueſs with accuracy. His air was perfectly free from conſtraint, what the French call *degageé*. In face and perſon he was liker my learned and worthy friend, the Count de Buffon, than any two men I ever ſaw in the world. They muſt have been bad phyſiognomiſts that did not diſcern his capacity and underſtanding by his very countenance. Every look conveyed a ſentiment with it: he ſeemed to have no occaſion for other language, and indeed he ſpoke little. I offered, as uſual, to kiſs the ground before him; and of this he ſeemed to take little notice, ſtretching out his hand and ſhaking mine upon my riſing.

I SAT down with Aylo, three or four of the judges, Petros, Heikel the queen's chamberlain, and an Azage from the king's houſe, who whiſpered ſomething in his ear, and went out; which interruption prevented me from ſpeaking as I was prepared to do, or give him my preſent, which a man held behind me. He began gravely, "Yagoube, I think that is your name, hear what I ſay to you, and mark what I recommend to you. You are a man, I am told, who make it your buſineſs to wander in the fields in ſearch after trees and graſs in ſolitary places, and to ſit up all night alone looking at the ſtars of the heavens: Other countries are not like this, though this was never ſo bad as it is now. Theſe wretches here are enemies to ſtrangers; if they ſaw you alone in your own parlour, their firſt thought would be how to murder you; though they knew they were to get nothing by it, they would murder you for mere miſchief." "The devil is ſtrong in them," ſays a voice from a corner of the room, which appeared to be that of a prieſt. "Therefore," ſays the Ras, "after a long converſation with your friend Aylo, whoſe advice I hear you happily take, as indeed we all do, I have thought that ſituation beſt which leaves you at liberty to follow your own deſigns, at the ſame time that it puts your perſon in ſafety; that you will not be troubled with monks about their religious matters, or in danger from theſe raſcals that may ſeek to murder you for money."

"What are the monks?" ſays the ſame voice from the corner; "the monks will never meddle with ſuch a man as this."—"Therefore the king," continued the Ras, without taking any notice of the interruption, "has appointed you Baalomaal, and to command the Koccob horſe, which I thought to have given to Francis, an old ſoldier of mine; but he is poor, and we will provide for him better, for theſe appointments have honour, but little profit." "Sir," ſays Francis, who was in preſence, but behind, "it is in much more honourable hands than either mine or the Armenian's, or any other white man's, ſince the days of Hatzè Menas, and ſo I told the king to-day." "Very well, Francis," ſays the Ras; "it becomes a ſoldier to ſpeak the truth, whether it makes for or againſt himſelf. Go then to the king, and kiſs the ground upon your appointment. I ſee you have already learned this ceremony of our's; Aylo and Heikel are very proper perſons to go with you. The king expreſſed his ſurpriſe to me laſt night he had not ſeen you; and there too is Tecla Mariam, the king's ſecretary, who came with your appointment from the palace to-day." The man in the corner, that I took for a prieſt, was this Tecla Mariam, a ſcribe. Out of the king's preſence men of this order cover their heads, as do the prieſts, which was the reaſon of my miſtake.

I then gave him a preſent, which he ſcarce looked at, as a number of people were preſſing in at the door from curioſity or buſineſs. Among theſe I diſcerned Abba Salama. Every body then went out but myſelf, and theſe people were ruſhing in behind me, and had divided me from my company. The Ras, however, ſeeing me ſtanding alone, cried, "Shut the door;" and aſked me, in a low tone of voice, "Have you any thing private to ſay?" "I ſee you are buſy, Sir," ſaid I; "but I will ſpeak to Ozoro Eſther." His anxious countenance brightened up in a moment. "That is true," ſays he, "Yagoube, it will require a long day to ſettle that account with you: Will the boy live?" "The life of man is in the hand of God," ſaid I, "but I ſhould hope the worſt is over;" upon which he called to one of his ſervants, "Carry Yagoube to Ozoro Eſther."

It is needleſs for me to take up the reader's time with any thing but what illuſtrates my travels; he may therefore gueſs the converſation that flowed from a grateful heart on that occaſion. I ordered her child to be brought to her every forenoon, upon condition ſhe returned him ſoon after mid-day. I then took a ſpeedy leave of Ozoro Eſther, the reaſon of which I told her when ſhe was following me to the door. She ſaid, "When ſhall I lay my hands upon that idiot Aylo? The Ras would have done any thing; he had appointed you Palambaras, but, upon converſing with Aylo, he had changed his mind. He ſays it will create envy, and take up your time. What ſignifies their envy? Do not they envy Ras Michael? and where can you paſs your time better than at court, with a command under the king." I ſaid, "All is for the beſt, Aylo did well; all is for the beſt." I then left her unconvinced, and ſaying, "I will not forgive this to Ayto Aylo theſe ſeven years."

Aylo and Heikel had gone on to the palace, wondering, as did the whole company, what could be my private conference with Michael, which, after playing abundantly with their curioſity, I explained to them next day.

I went afterwards to the king's palace, and met Aylo and Heikel at the door of the preſence-chamber. Tecla Mariam walked before us to the foot of the throne; after which I advanced and proſtrated myſelf upon the ground. "I have brought you a ſervant," ſays he to the king, "from ſo diſtant a country, that if you ever let him eſcape, we ſhall never be able to follow him, or know where to ſeek him." This was ſaid facetiouſly by an old familiar ſervant; but the king made no reply, as far as we could gueſs, for his mouth was covered, nor did he ſhew any alteration of countenance. Five people were ſtanding on each ſide of the throne, all young men, three on his left, and two on his right. One of theſe, the ſon of Tecla Mariam, (afterwards my great friend) who ſtood uppermoſt on the left hand, came up, and taking hold of me by the hand, placed me immediately above him; when ſeeing I had no knife in my girdle, he pulled out his own and gave it to me. Upon being placed, I again kiſſed the ground.

The king was in an alcove; the reſt went out of ſight from where the throne was, and ſat down. The uſual queſtions now began about Jeruſalem and the holy places—where my country was? which it was impoſſible to deſcribe, as they knew the ſituation of no country but their own—why I came ſo far?—whether the moon and the ſtars, but eſpecially the moon, was the ſame in my country as in theirs?—and a great many ſuch idle and tireſome queſtions. I had ſeveral times offered to take my preſent from the man who held it, that I might offer it to his Majeſty and go away; but the king always made a ſign to put it off, till, being tired to death with ſtanding, I leaned againſt the wall. Aylo was faſt aſleep, and Ayto Heikel and the Greeks curſing their maſter in their heart for ſpoiling the good ſupper that Anthulè his treaſurer had prepared for us. This, as we afterwards found out, the king very well knew, and reſolved to try our patience to the utmoſt. At laſt, Ayto Aylo ſtole away to bed, and every body elſe after him, except thoſe who had accompanied me, who were ready to die with thirſt, and drop down with wearineſs. It was agreed by thoſe that were out of ſight, to ſend Tecla Mariam to whiſper in the king's ear, that I had not been well, which he did, but no notice was taken of it. It was now paſt ten o'clock, and he ſhewed no inclination to go to bed.

Hitherto, while there were ſtrangers in the room, he had ſpoken to us by an officer called Kal Hatzé, *the voice or word of the king*; but now, when there were nine or ten of us, his menial ſervants, only preſent, he uncovered his face and mouth, and ſpoke himſelf. Sometimes it was about Jeruſalem, ſometimes about horſes, at other times about ſhooting; again about the Indies; how far I could look into the heavens with my teleſcopes: and all theſe were deliberately and circumſtantially repeated, if they were not pointedly anſwered. I was abſolutely in deſpair, and ſcarcely able to ſpeak a word, inwardly mourning the hardneſs of my lot in this my firſt preferment, and ſincerely praying it might be my laſt promotion in this court. At laſt all the Greeks began to be impatient, and got out of the corner of the room behind the alcove, and ſtood immediately before the throne. The king ſeemed to be aſtoniſhed at ſeeing them, and told them he thought they had all been at home long ago. They ſaid, however, they would not go without me; which the king ſaid could not be, for one of the duties of my employment was to be charged with the door of his bed-chamber that night.

I THINK I could almoſt have killed him in that inſtant. At laſt Ayto Heikel, taking courage, came forward to him, pretending a meſſage from the queen, and whiſpered him ſomething in the ear, probably that the Ras would take it ill. He then laughed, ſaid he thought we had ſupped, and diſmiſſed us.

CHAP. IX.

Tranſactions at Gondar.

WE went all to Authulé's houſe to ſupper in violent rage, ſuch anger as is uſual with hungry men. We brought with us from the palace three of my brother Baalomaals, and one who had ſtood to make up the number, though he was not in office; his name was Guebra Maſcal, he was a ſiſter's ſon of the Ras, and commanded one third of the troops of Tigré, which carried fire-arms, that is about 2000 men. He was reputed the beſt officer of that kind that the Ras had, and was a man about 30 years of age, ſhort, ſquare, and well made, with a very unpromiſing countenance; flat noſe, wide mouth, of a very yellow complexion, and much pitted with the ſmall-pox; he had a moſt uncommon preſumption upon the merit of paſt ſervices, and had the greateſt opinion of his own knowledge in the uſe of fire-arms, to which he did not ſcruple to ſay Ras Michael owed all his victories. Indeed it was to the good opinion that the Ras had of him as a ſoldier that he owed his being ſuffered to continue at Gondar; for he was ſuſpected to have been familiar with one of his uncle's wives in Tigré, by whom it was thought he had a child, at leaſt the Ras put away his wife, and never owned the child to be his.

This man ſupped with us that night, and thence began one of the moſt ſerious affairs I ever had in Abyſſinia. Guebra Maſcal, as uſual, vaunted inceſſantly his ſkill in fire-arms, the wonderful gun that he had, and feats he had done with it. Petros ſaid, laughing, to him, "You have a genius for ſhooting, but you have had no opportunity to learn. Now, Yagoube is come, he will teach you ſomething worth talking off." They had all drank abundantly, and Guebra Maſcal had uttered words that I thought were in contempt of me. I believe, replied I peeviſhly enough, Guebra Maſcal, I ſhould ſuſpect, from your diſcourſe, you neither knew men nor guns; every gun of mine in the hands of my ſervants ſhall kill twice as far as yours, for my own, it is not worth my while to put a ball in it: When I compare with you, the end of a tallow-candle in my gun ſhall do more execution than an iron ball in the beſt of yours, with all the ſkill and experience you pretend to.

He ſaid I was a Frank, and a liar, and, upon my immediately riſing up, he gave me a kick with his foot. I was quite blind with paſſion, ſeized him by the throat, and threw him on the ground ſtout as he was. The Abyſſinians know nothing of either wreſtling or boxing. He drew his knife as he was falling, attempted to cut me in the face, but his arm not being at freedom, all he could do was to give me a very trifling ſtab, or wound, near the crown of the head, ſo that the blood trickled down over my face. I had tript him up, but till then had never ſtruck him. I now wreſted the knife from him with a full intention to kill him; but Providence directed better. Inſtead of the point, I ſtruck ſo violently with the handle upon his face as to leave ſcars, which would be diſtinguiſhed even among the deep marks of the ſmall-pox. An adventure ſo new, and ſo unexpected, preſently overcame the effects of wine. It was too late to diſturb anybody either in the palace or at the houſe of the Ras. A hundred opinions were immediately ſtarted; ſome were for ſending us up to the king, as we were actually in the precincts of the palace, where lifting a hand is death. Ayto Heikel adviſed that I ſhould go, late as it was, to Koſcam; and Petros, that I ſhould repair immediately to the houſe of Ayto Aylo, while the two Baalomaals were for taking me to ſleep in the palace. Anthulè, in whoſe houſe I was, and who was therefore moſt ſhocked at the outrage, wiſhed me to ſtay in his houſe, where I was, from a ſuppoſition that I was ſeriouſly wounded, which all of them, ſeeing the blood fall over my eyes, ſeemed to think was the caſe, and he, in the morning, at the king's riſing, was to ſtate the matter as it happened. All theſe advices appeared good when they were propoſed; for my part, I thought they only tended to make bad worſe, and bore the appearance of guilt, of which I was not conſcious.

I NOW determined to go home, and to bed in my own houſe. With that intention, I waſhed my face and wound with vinegar, and found the blood to be already ſtaunched. I then wrapt myſelf up in my cloak, and returned home without accident, and went to bed. But this would neither ſatisfy Ayto Heikel nor Petros, who went to the houſe of

Ayto Aylo, then paſt midnight, ſo that early in the morning, when ſcarce light, I ſaw him come into my chamber. Guebra Maſcal had fled to the houſe of Kefla Yaſous his relation; and the firſt news we heard in the morning, after Ayto Aylo arrived, were, that Guebra Maſcal was in irons at the Ras's houſe.

Every perſon that came afterwards brought up ſome new account; the whole people preſent had been examined, and had given, without variation, the true particulars of my forbearance, and his inſolent behaviour. Every body trembled for ſome violent reſolution the Ras was to take on my firſt complaint. The town was full of Tigrè ſoldiers, and nobody ſaw clearer than I did, however favourable a turn this had taken for me in the beginning, it might be my deſtruction in the end.

I asked Ayto Aylo his opinion. He ſeemed at a loſs to give it me; but ſaid, in an uncertain tone of voice, he could wiſh that I would not complain of Guebra Maſcal while I was angry, or while the Ras was ſo inveterate againſt him, till ſome of his friends had ſpoken, and appeaſed, at leaſt, his firſt reſentment. I anſwered, "That I was of a contrary opinion, and that no time was to be loſt: remember the letter of Mahomet Gibberti; remember his confidence yeſterday of my being ſafe where he was; remember the influence of Ozoro Eſther, and do not let us loſe a moment." "What, ſays Aylo to me in great ſurpriſe, are you mad? Would you have him cut to pieces in the midſt of 20,000 of his countrymen? Would you be dimmenia, that is, guilty of the blood of all the province of Tigrè, through which you muſt go in your way home?"

"Juſt the contrary, ſaid I, nobody has ſo great a right over the Ras's anger as I have, being the perſon injured; and, as you and I can get acceſs to Ozoro Eſther when we pleaſe, let us go immediately thither, and ſtop the progreſs of this affair while it is not yet generally known. People that talk of my being wounded expect to ſee me, I ſuppoſe, without a leg or an arm. When they ſee me ſo early riding in the ſtreet, all will paſs for a ſtory as it ſhould do. Would you wiſh to pardon him entirely?"—"That goes againſt my heart, too, ſays Aylo, he is a bad man."—"My good friend, ſaid I, be in this guided by me, I know we both think the ſame thing. If he is a bad man, he was a bad man before I knew him. You know what you told me yourſelf of the Ras's jealouſy of him. What if he was to revenge his own wrongs, under pretence of giving me ſatisfaction for mine? Come, loſe no time, get upon your mule, go with me to Ozoro Eſther, I will anſwer for the conſequences."

We arrived there; the Ras was not ſitting in judgment, he had drank hard the night before, on occaſion of Powuſſen's marriage, and was not in bed when the ſtory of the fray reached him. We found Ozoro Eſther in a violent anger and agitation, which was much alleviated by my laughing. On her aſking me about my wound, which had been repreſented to her as dangerous, "I am afraid, ſaid I, poor Guebra Maſcal is worſe wounded than I." "Is he wounded too? ſays ſhe; I hope it is in his heart." "Indeed, replied I, Madam, there are no wounds on either ſide. He was very drunk, and I gave him ſeveral blows upon the face as he deſerved, and he has already got all the chaſtiſement he ought to have; it was all a piece of folly." "Prodigious! ſays ſhe; is this ſo?" "It is ſo, ſays Aylo, and you ſhall hear it all by-and-by, only let us ſtop the propagation of this fooliſh ſtory."

The Ras in the inſtant ſent for us. He was naked, ſitting on a ſtool, and a ſlave ſwathing up his lame leg with a broad belt or bandage. I aſked him calmly and pleaſantly if I could be of any ſervice to him? He looked at me with a grin, the moſt ghaſtly I ever ſaw, as half diſpleaſed. "What! ſays he, are you all mad? Aylo, what is the matter between him and that miſcreant Guebra Maſcal?"—"Why, ſaid I, I am come to tell you that myſelf; why do you aſk Ayto Aylo? Guebra Maſcal got drunk, was inſolent, and ſtruck me. I was ſober, and beat him, as you will ſee by his face; and I have now come to you to ſay I am ſorry that I lifted my hand againſt your nephew; but he was in the wrong, and drunk; and I thought it was better to chaſtiſe him on the ſpot, than truſt him to you, who perhaps might take the affair to heart, for we all know your juſtice, and that being your relation is no excuſe when you judge between man and man. "I order you, Aylo, ſays Michael, as you eſteem my friendſhip, to tell me the truth, really as it was, and without diſguiſe or concealment."

Aylo began accordingly to relate the whole hiſtory, when a ſervant called me out to Ozoro Eſther. I found with her another nephew of the Ras, a much better man, called Welleta Selaſſé, who came from Kefla Yaſous, and Guebra Maſcal himſelf, deſiring I would forgive and intercede for him, for it was a drunken quarrel without malice. Ozoro Eſther had told him part. "Come in with me, ſaid I, and you ſhall ſee I never will leave the Ras till he forgive him." "Let him puniſh him, ſays Welleta Selaſſé, he is a bad man, but don't let the Ras either kill or maim him." "Come, ſaid I, let us go to the Ras, and he ſhall neither kill, maim, nor puniſh him, if I can help it. It is my firſt requeſt; if he refuſes me I will return to Jidda; come and hear."

Aylo had urged the thing home to the Ras in the proper light—that of my ſafety. "You are a wiſe man, ſays Michael, now perfectly cool, as ſoon as he ſaw me and Welleta Selaſſé. It is a man like you that goes far in ſafety, which is the end we all aim at. I feel the affront offered you more than you do, but will not have the puniſhment attributed to you; this affair ſhall turn to your honour and ſecurity, and in that light only I can paſs over his inſolence." "Welleta Selaſſé, ſays he, falling into a violent paſſion in an inſtant, What ſort of behaviour is this my men have adopted with ſtrangers? and *my ſtranger*, too, and in the king's palace, and the king's ſervant? What! am I dead? or become incapable of governing longer?" Welleta Selaſſé bowed, but was afraid to ſpeak, and indeed the Ras looked like a fiend.

"Come, ſays the Ras, let me ſee your head." I ſhewed him where the blood was already hardened, and ſaid it was a very ſlight cut. "A cut, continued Michael, over that part, with one of our knives, is mortal." "You ſee, Sir, ſaid I, I have not even clipt the hair about the wound; it is nothing. Now give me your promiſe you will ſet Guebra Maſcal at liberty; and not only that, but you are not to reproach him with the affair further than that he was drunk, not a crime in this country." "No, truly, ſays he, it is not; but that is, becauſe it is very rare that people fight with knives when they are drunk. I ſcarce ever heard of it, even

in

in the camp." "I fancy, ſaid I, endeavouring to give a light turn to the converſation, they have not often wherewithal to get drunk in your camp." "Not this laſt year, ſays he, laughing, there were no houſes in the country." "But let me only merit, ſaid I, Welleta Selaſſé's friendſhip, by making him the meſſenger of good news to Guebra Maſcal, that he is at liberty, and you have forgiven him." "At liberty! ſays he, Where is he?" "In your houſe, ſaid I, ſomewhere, in irons." "That is Eſther's intelligence, continued the Ras; theſe women tell you all their ſecrets, but when I remember your behaviour to them I do not wonder at it, and that conſideration likewiſe obliges me to grant what you aſk. Go, Welleta Selaſſé, and free that dog from his collar, and direct him to go to Welleta Michael, who will give him his orders to levy the meery in Woggora; let him not ſee my face till he returns.

Ozoro Esther gave us breakfaſt, to which ſeveral of the Greeks came. After which I went to Koſcam, where I heard a thouſand curſes upon Guebra Maſcal. The whole affair was now made up, and the king was acquainted with the iſſue of it. I ſtood in my place, where he ſhewed me very great marks of favour; he was grave, however, and ſorrowful, as if mortified with what had happened. The king ordered me to ſtay and dine at the palace, and he would ſend me my dinner. I there ſaw the ſons of Kaſmati Eſhté, Aylo, and Engedan, and two Welleta Selaſſés; one the ſon of Tecla Mariam, the other the ſon of a great nobleman in Goiam, all young men, with whom I lived ever after in perfect familiarity and friendſhip. The two laſt were my brethren Baalomaal, or gentlemen of the king's bed-chamber.

They all ſeemed to have taken my cauſe to heart more than I wiſhed them to do, for fear it ſhould be productive of ſome new quarrel. For my own part, I never was ſo dejected in my life. The troubleſome proſpect before me preſented itſelf day and night. I more than twenty times reſolved to return by Tigrè, to which I was more inclined by the loſs of a young man who accompanied me through Barbary, and aſſiſted me in the drawings of architecture which I made for the king there, part of which he was ſtill advancing here, when a dyſentery, which had attacked him in Arabia Felix, put an end to his life* at Gondar. A conſiderable diſturbance was apprehended upon burying him in a church-yard. Abba Salama uſed his utmoſt endeavours to raiſe the populace and take him out of his grave; but ſome exertions of the Ras quieted both Abba Salama and the tumults.

I began, however, to look upon every thing now as full of difficulty and danger; and, from this conſtant fretting and deſpondency, I found my health much impaired, and that I was upon the point of becoming ſeriouſly ill. There was one thing that contributed in ſome meaſure to diſſipate theſe melancholy thoughts, which was, that all Gondar was in one ſcene of feſtivity. Ozoro Ayabdar, daughter of the late Welled Hawaryat, by Ozoro Altaſh, Ozoro Eſther's ſiſter, and the Iteghè's youngeſt daughter, conſequently granddaughter to Michael, was married to Powuſſen, now governor of Begemder. The king gave her large diſtricts of land in that province, and Ras Michael a large portion of gold,

---

* See Introduction.

muſkets, cattle, and horſes. All the town, that wiſhed to be well-looked upon by either party, brought ſomething conſiderable as a preſent. The Ras, Ozoro Eſther, and Ozoro Altaſh, entertained all Gondar. A vaſt number of cattle was ſlaughtered every day, and the whole town looked like one great market; the common people, in every ſtreet, appearing loaded with pieces of raw beef, while drink circulated in the ſame proportion. The Ras inſiſted upon my dining with him every day, when he was ſure to give me a headach with the quantity of mead, or hydromel, he forced me to ſwallow, a liquor that never agreed with me from the firſt day to the laſt.

After dinner we ſlipt away to parties of ladies, where anarchy prevailed as complete as at the houſe of the Ras. All the married women ate, drank, and ſmoaked like the men; and it is impoſſible to convey to the reader any idea of this bacchanalian ſcene in terms of common decency. I found it neceſſary to quit this riot for a ſhort time, and get leave to breathe the freſh air of the country, at ſuch a diſtance as that, once a day, or once in two days, I might be at the palace, and avoid the conſtant ſucceſſion of thoſe violent ſcenes of debauchery of which no European can form any idea, and which it was impoſſible to eſcape, even at Koſcam.

Although the king's favour, the protection of the Ras, and my obliging, attentive, and lowly behaviour to every body, had made me as popular as I could wiſh at Gondar, and among the Tigrans fully as much as thoſe of Amhara, yet it was eaſy to perceive, that the cauſe of my quarrel with Guebra Maſcal was not yet forgot.

One day, when I was ſtanding by the king in the palace, he aſked, in diſcourſe, "Whether I, too, was not drunk in the quarrel with Guebra Maſcal, before we came to blows?" and, upon my ſaying that I was perfectly ſober, both before and after, becauſe Anthulè's red wine was finiſhed, and I never willingly drank hydromel, or mead, he aſked with a degree of keenneſs, "Did you then ſoberly ſay to Guebra Maſcal, that an end of a tallow candle, in a gun in your hand, would do more execution than an iron bullet in his?"—"Certainly, Sir, I did ſo."—"And why did you ſay this?" ſays the king dryly enough, and in a manner I had not before obſerved. "Becauſe, replied I, it was truth, and a proper reproof to a vain man, who, whatever eminence he might have obtained in a country like this, has not knowledge enough to entitle him to the truſt of cleaning a gun in mine."—"O! ho! continued the king; as for his knowledge I am not ſpeaking of that, but about his gun. You will not perſuade me that, with a tallow candle, you can kill a man or a horſe."—"Pardon me, Sir, ſaid I, bowing very reſpectfully, I will attempt to perſuade you of nothing but what you pleaſe to be convinced of: Guebra Maſcal is my equal no more, you are my maſter, and, while I am at your court, under your protection, you are in place of my ſovereign, it would be great preſumption in me to argue with you, or lead to a converſation againſt an opinion that you profeſs you are already fixed in."—"No, no, ſays he, with an air of great kindneſs, by no means, I was only afraid you would expoſe yourſelf before bad people; what you ſay to me is nothing."—"And what I ſay to you, Sir, has always been as ſcrupulouſly true as if I had been ſpeaking to the king my native ſovereign and maſter. Whether

I can kill a man with a candle, or not, is an experiment that ſhould not be made. Tell me, however, what I ſhall do before you that you may deem an equivalent? Will piercing the table, upon which your dinner is ſerved, (it was of ſycamore, about three quarters of an inch thick), at the length of this room, be deemed a ſufficient proof of what I advanced?"

"Ah, Yagoube, Yagoube, ſays the king, take care what you ſay. That is indeed more than Guebra Maſcal will do at that diſtance; but take great care; you don't know theſe people; they will lie themſelves all day; nay, their whole life is one lie; but of you they expect better, or would be glad to find worſe; take care." Ayto Engedan, who was then preſent, ſaid, "I am ſure if Yagoube ſays he can do it, he will do it; but how, I don't know. Can you ſhoot through my ſhield with a tallow candle?"—"To you, Ayto Engedan, ſaid I, I can ſpeak freely; I could ſhoot thro' your ſhield if it was the ſtrongeſt in the army, and kill the ſtrongeſt man in the army that held it before him. When will you ſee this tried?"—"Why now, ſays the king; there is *nobody here*."—"The ſooner the better, ſaid I; I would not wiſh to remain for a moment longer under ſo diſagreeable an imputation as that of lying, an infamous one in *my* country, whatever it may be in this. Let me ſend for my gun; the king will look out at the window."—"*Nobody*, ſays he, knows any thing of it; *nobody will come*."

The king appeared to be very anxious, and, I ſaw plainly, incredulous. The gun was brought; Engedan's ſhield was produced, which was of a ſtrong buffalo's hide. I ſaid to him, "This is a weak one, give me one ſtronger." He ſhook his head, and ſaid, "Ah, Yagoube, you'll find it ſtrong enough; Engedan's ſhield is known to be no toy." Tecla Mariam brought ſuch a ſhield, and the Billetana Gueta Tecla another, both of which were moſt excellent in their kind. I loaded the gun before them, firſt with powder, then upon it ſlid down one half of what we call a farthing candle; and, having beat off the handles of three ſhields, I put them cloſe in contact with each other, and ſet them all three againſt a poſt.

Now, Engedan, ſaid I, when you pleaſe ſay—Fire! but mind you have taken leave of your good ſhield for ever." The word was given, and the gun fired. It ſtruck the three ſhields, neither in the moſt difficult nor the eaſieſt place for perforation, ſomething leſs than half way between the rim and the boſs. The candle went through the three ſhields with ſuch violence that it daſhed itſelf to a thouſand pieces againſt a ſtone-wall behind it. I turned to Engedan, ſaying very lowly, gravely, and without exultation or triumph, on the contrary with abſolute indifference, "Did not I tell you your ſhield was naught?" A great ſhout of applauſe followed from about a thouſand people that were gathered together. The three ſhields were carried to the king, who exclaimed in great tranſport, I did not believe it before I ſaw it, and I can ſcarce believe it now I have ſeen it. Where is Guebra Maſcal's confidence now? But what do either he or we know? We know nothing." I thought he looked abaſhed.

"Ayto Engedan, ſaid I, we muſt have a touch at that table. It was ſaid, the piercing that was more than Guebra

Maſcal could do. We have one half of the candle left ſtill; it is the thinneſt, weakeſt half, and I ſhall put the wick foremoſt, becauſe the cotton is ſofteſt." The table being now properly placed, to Engedan's utmoſt aſtoniſhment the candle, with the wick foremoſt, went through the table, as the other had gone through the three ſhields. "By St Michael! ſays Engedan, Yagoube, hereafter ſay to me you can raiſe my father Eſhté from the grave, and I will believe you." Some prieſts who were there, though ſurpriſed at firſt, ſeemed afterward to treat it rather lightly, becauſe they thought it below their dignity to be ſurpriſed at any thing. They ſaid it was done (mucktoub) by writing, by which they meant magic. Every body embraced that opinion as an evident and rational one, and ſo the wonder with them ceaſed. But it was not ſo with the king: It made the moſt favourable and laſting impreſſion upon his mind; nor did I ever after ſee, in his countenance, any marks either of doubt or diffidence, but always, on the contrary, the moſt deciſive proofs of friendſhip, confidence, and attention, and the moſt implicit belief of every thing I advanced upon any ſubject from my own knowledge.

THE experiment was twice tried afterwards in preſence of Ras Michael. But he would not riſk his good ſhields, and always produced the table, ſaying, "Engedan and thoſe fooliſh boys were rightly ſerved; they thought Yagoube was a liar like themſelves, and they loſt their ſhields; but I believed him, and gave him my table for curioſity only, and ſo I ſaved mine."

As I may now ſay I was ſettled in this country, and had an opportunity of being informed of the manners, government, and preſent ſtate of it, I ſhall here inform the reader of what I think moſt worthy his attention, whether ancient or modern, while we are yet in peace, before we are called out to a campaign or war, attended with every diſadvantage, danger, and ſource of confuſion.

CHAP. X.

Geographical Diviſion of Abyſſinia into Provinces.

AT Maſuah, that is, on the coaſt of the Red Sea, begins an imaginary diviſion of Abyſſinia into two, which is rather a diviſion of language than ſtrictly to be underſtood as territorial. The firſt diviſion is called *Tigré*, between the Red Sea and the river Tacazzé. Between that river and the Nile, weſtward, where it bounds the Galla, it is called *Amhara.*

WHATEVER convenience there may be from this diviſion, there is neither geographical nor hiſtorical preciſion in it, for there are many little provinces included in the firſt that do not belong to Tigré; and, in the ſecond diviſion, which is Amhara, that which gives the name is but a very ſmall part of it.

Again, in point of language, there is a variety of tongues ſpoken in the ſecond diviſion beſides that of Amhara. In Tigrè, however, the ſeparation as to languages holds true, as there is no tongue known there but Geez, or that of the Shepherds.

Masuah, in ancient times, was one of the principal places of reſidence of the Baharnagaſh, who, when he was not there himſelf, conſtantly left his deputy, or lieutenant. In ſummer he reſided for ſeveral months in the iſland of Dahalac, then accounted part of his territory. He was, after the King and Betwudet, the perſon of the greateſt conſideration in the kingdom, and was inveſted with ſendick and nagareet, the kettle-drum, and colours, marks of ſupreme command.

Masuah was taken, and a baſha eſtabliſhed there ſoon after, as we have ſeen in the hiſtory, in the reign of Menas, when the Baharnagaſh, named Iſaac, confederated with the Turkiſh baſha, and ceded to him a great territory, part of his own government, and with it Dobarwa, the capital of his province, divided only by the river Mareb from Tigré. From this time this office fell into diſrepute in the kingdom. The ſendick and nagareet, the marks of ſupreme power, were taken from him, and he never was allowed a place in council, unleſs ſpecially called on by the king. He preſerves his privilege of being crowned with gold; but, when appointed, has a cloak thrown over him, the one ſide white, the other a dark blue, and the officer who crowns him admoniſhes him of what will befal him if he preſerves his allegiance, which is ſignified by the white ſide of the cloak; and the diſgrace and puniſhment that is to attend his treaſon, and which has fallen upon his predeceſſors, which he figures to him by turning up the colour of mourning.

Besides the dignity attending this office, it was alſo one of the moſt lucrative. Frankincenſe, myrrh, and a ſpecies of cinnamon, called by the Italians Cannella, with ſeveral kinds of gums and dyes, all very precious, from Cape Gardefan to Bilur, were the valuable produce of this country: but this territory, though conſiderable in length, is not of any great breadth; for, from ſouth of Hadea to Maſuah, it conſiſts in a belt ſeldom above forty miles from the ſea, which is bounded by a ridge of very high mountains, running parallel to the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, as far as Maſuah.

After Azab begin the mines of foſſile ſalt, which, cut into ſquare, ſolid bricks of about a foot long, ſerve in place of the ſilver currency in Abyſſinia; and from this, as from a kind of mint, great benefit accrues alſo.

From Maſuah the ſame narrow belt continues to Suakem; nay, indeed, though the rains do not reach ſo far, the mountains continue to the Iſthmus of Suez. This northern province of the Baharnagaſh is called the Habab, or the land of the Agaazi, or Shepherds; they ſpeak one language, which they call Geez, or the language of the Agaazi. From the earlieſt times, they have had letters and writing among them; and no other has ever been introduced into Abyſſinia, to this day, as we have already obſerved.

Since the expulſion of the Turks from Dobarwa and the continent of Abyſſinia, Maſuah has been governed by a Naybe, himſelf one of the Shepherds, but Mahometan. A treaty formerly ſubſiſted, that the king ſhould receive half of the revenue of the cuſtomhouſe in Maſuah; in return for which he was ſuffered to enjoy that ſmall ſtripe of barren, dry country called Samhar, inhabited by black ſhepherds called Shiho, reaching from Hamazen on the north to the foot of the mountain Taranta on the ſouth; but, by the favour of Michael, that is, by bribery and corruption, he has poſſeſſed himſelf of two large frontier towns, Dixan and Dobarwa, by leaſe, for a trifling ſum, which he pays the king yearly; this muſt neceſſarily very much weaken this ſtate, if it ſhould ever again have war with the Turks, of which indeed there is no great probability.

The next province in Abyſſinia, as well for greatneſs as riches, power, and dignity, and neareſt Maſuah, is Tigrè. It is bounded by the territory of the Baharnagaſh, that is, by the river Mareb on the eaſt, and the Tacazzè upon the weſt. It is about one hundred and twenty miles broad from E. to W. and two hundred from N. to S. This is its preſent ſituation. The hand of uſurping power has aboliſhed all diſtinction on the weſt-ſide of the Tacazzè; beſides, many large governments, ſuch as Enderta and Antalow, and great part of the Baharnagaſh, were ſwallowed up in this province to the eaſt.

What, in a ſpecial manner, makes the riches of Tigré, is, that it lies neareſt the market, which is Arabia; and all the merchandiſe deſtined to croſs the Red Sea muſt paſs through this province, ſo that the governor has the choice of all commodities wherewith to make his market. The ſtrongeſt male, the moſt beautiful female ſlaves, the pureſt gold, the largeſt teeth of ivory, all muſt paſs through his hand. Fire-arms, moreover, which for many years have decided who is the moſt powerful in Abyſſinia, all theſe come from Arabia, and not one can be purchaſed without his knowing to whom it goes, and after his having had the firſt refuſal of it.

Sire, a province about twenty-five miles broad, and not much more in length, is reckoned as part of Tigré alſo, but this is not a new uſurpation. It loſt the rank of a province, and was united to Tigré for the miſbehaviour of its governor Kaſmati Claudius, in an expedition againſt the Shangalla in the reign of Yaſous the Great. In my time, it began again to get into reputation, and was by Ras Michael's own conſent diſjoined from his province, and given firſt to his ſon Welled Hawaryat, together with Samen, and, after his death, to Ayto Tesfos, a very amiable man, gallant ſoldier, and good officer; who, fighting bravely in the king's ſervice at the battle of Serbraxos, was there wounded and taken priſoner, and died of his wounds afterwards.

After paſſing the Tacazzè, the boundary between Sirè and Samen, we come to that mountainous provincec alled by the laſt name. A large chain of rugged mountains, where is the Jews Rock, (which I ſhall often mention as the higheſt), reaches from the ſouth of Tigré down near to Waldubba, the low, hot country that bounds Abyſſinia on the north. It is about 80 miles in length, in few places 30 broad, and in ſome much leſs. It is in great part poſſeſſed by Jews, and *there* Gideon and Judith, king and queen of that nation, and, as they ſay, of the houſe of Judah, maintain ſtill their ancient ſovereignty and religion from very early times.

On the N. E. of Tigré lies the province of Begemder. It borders upon Angot, whoſe governor is called Angot Ras; but the whole province now, excepting a few villages, is conquered by the Galla.

It has Amhara, which runs parallel to it, on the ſouth, and is ſeparated from it by the river Baſhilo. Both theſe provinces are bounded by the river Nile on the weſt. Begemder is about 180 miles in its greateſt length, and 60 in breadth, comprehending Laſta, a mountainous province, ſometimes depending on Begemder, but often in rebellion. The inhabitants are eſteemed the beſt ſoldiers in Abyſſinia, men of great ſtrength and ſtature, but cruel and uncivilized; ſo that they are called, in common converſation and writing, the peaſants, or barbarians of Laſta; they pay to the king 1000 ounces of gold.

Several ſmall provinces are now diſmembered from Begemder, ſuch as Foggora, a ſmall ſtripe reaching S. and N. about 35 miles between Emfras and Dara, and about 12 miles broad from E. to W. from the mountains of Begemder to the lake Tzana. On the north end of this are two ſmall governments, Dreeda and Karoota, the only territory in Abyſſinia that produces wine, the merchants trade to Caffa and Narea, in the country of the Galla. We ſpeak of theſe territories as they are in point of right; but when a nobleman of great power is governor of the province of Begemder, he values not leſſer rights, but unites them all to his province.

Begemder is the ſtrength of Abyſſinia in horſemen. It is ſaid, that, with Laſta, it can bring out 45,000 men; but this, as far as ever I could inform myſelf, is a great exaggeration. They are exceeding good ſoldiers when they are pleaſed with their general, and the cauſe for which they fight; otherwiſe, they are eaſily divided, great many private intereſts being continually kept alive, as it is thought induſtriouſly, by government itſelf. It is well ſtocked with cattle of every kind, all very beautiful. The mountains are full of iron-mines; they are not ſo ſteep and rocky nor ſo frequent, as in other provinces, if we except only Laſta, and abound in all ſort of wild fowl and game.

The ſouth end of the province near Nefas Muſa is cut into prodigious gullies apparently by floods, of which we have no hiſtory. It is the great barrier againſt the encroachments of the Galla; and, by many attempts, they have tried to make a ſettlement in it, but all in vain. Whole tribes of them have been extinguiſhed in this their endeavour.

In many provinces of Abyſſinia, favour is the only neceſſary to procure the government; others are given to poor noblemen, that, by fleecing the people, they may grow rich, and repair their fortune. But the conſequence of Begemder is ſo well known to the ſtate, as reaching ſo near the metropolis, and ſupplying it ſo conſtantly with all ſorts of proviſions, that none but noblemen of rank, family, and character, able to maintain a large number of troops always on foot, and in good order, are truſted with its government.

Immediately next to this is Amhara, between the two rivers Baſhilo and Geſhen. The length of this country

from

from E. to W. is about 120 miles, and its breadth ſomething more than 40. It is a very mountainous country, full of nobility; the men are reckoned the handſomeſt in Abyſſinia, as well as the braveſt. With the ordinary arms, the lance and ſhield, they are thought to be ſuperior to double the number of any other ſoldiers in the kingdom. What, beſides, added to the dignity of this province, was the high mountain of Geſhen, or the graſſy mountain, whereon the king's ſons were formerly impriſoned, till ſurpriſed and murdered there in the Adelan war.

BETWEEN the two rivers Geſhen and Samba, is a low, unwholeſome, though fertile province, called Walaka; and ſouthward of that is Upper Shoa. This province, or kingdom, was famous for the retreat it gave to the only remaining prince of the houſe of Solomon, who fled from the maſſacre of his brethren by Judith, about the year 900, upon the rock of Damo. Here the royal family remained in ſecurity, and increaſed in number, for near 400 years, till they were reſtored. From thenceforward, as long as the king reſided in the ſouth of his dominions, great tenderneſs and diſtinction was ſhewn to the inhabitants of this province; and when the king returned again to Tigrè, he abandoned them tacitly to their own government.

AMHA YASOUS, prince at this day, and lineal deſcendant of the governor who firſt acknowledged the king, is now by connivance ſovereign of that province. In order to keep himſelf as independent and ſeparate from the reſt of Abyſſinia as poſſible, he has ſacrificed the province of Walaka, which belonged to him, to the Galla, who, by his own deſire, have ſurrounded Shoa on every ſide. But it is full of

thee

the braveſt, beſt horſemen, and beſt accoutred beyond all compariſon of any in Abyſſinia, and, when they pleaſe, they can diſpoſſeſs the Galla. Safe and independent as the prince of Shoa now is, he is ſtill the loyaliſt, and the friend to monarchy he ever was; and, upon any ſignal diſtreſs happening to the king, he never failed to ſuccour him powerfully with gold and troops, far beyond the quota formerly due from his province. This Shoa boaſts, likewiſe, the honour of being the native country of Tecla Haimanout, reſtorer of the line of Solomon, the founder of the monaſtery and Order of the monks of Debra Libanos, and of the power and wealth of the Abuna, and the clergy in general, of Abyſſinia.

GOJAM, from north-eaſt to ſouth-eaſt, is about 80 miles in length, and 40 in breadth. It is a very flat country, and all in paſture; has few mountains, but theſe are very high ones, and are chiefly on the banks of the Nile, to the ſouth, which river ſurrounds the province; ſo that, to a perſon who ſhould walk round Gojam, the Nile would be always on his left hand, from where it went ſouth, falling out of the lake Tzana, till it turns north through Fazuclo into the country of Sennaar and Egypt.

GOJAM is full of great herds of cattle, the largeſt in the high parts of Abyſſinia. The men are in the loweſt eſteem as ſoldiers, but the country is very populous. The Jeſuits were ſettled in many convents throughout the province, and are no where half ſo much deteſted. The monks of Gojam are thoſe of St Euſtathius, which may be called the Low Church of Abyſſinia. They are much inclined to turbulence in religious matters, and are, therefore, always made tools by diſcontented people, who have no religion at all.

On the ſouth-eaſt of the kingdom of Gojam is Damot. It is bounded by the Temci on the eaſt, by the Gult on the weſt, by the Nile on the ſouth, and by the high mountains of Amid Amid on the north. It is about 40 miles in length from north to ſouth, and ſomething more than 20 in breadth from eaſt to weſt. But all this peninſula, ſurrounded with the river, is called Gojam, in general terms, from a line down through the ſouth end of the lake to Miné, the paſſage of the Nile in the way to Narea.

It is ſurpriſing the Jeſuits, notwithſtanding their long abode in Gojam, have not known where this neighbouring country of Damot was ſituated, but have placed it ſouth of the Nile. They were often, however, in Damot, when Sela Chriſtos was attempting the conqueſt and converſion of the Agows.

On the other ſide of Amid Amid is the province of the Agows, bounded by thoſe mountains on the eaſt; by Burè and Umbarma, and the country of the Gongas, on the weſt; by Damot and Gafat upon the ſouth, and Dingleber on the north.

All thoſe countries from Abbo, ſuch as Goutto, Arooſi, and Wainadega, were formerly inhabited by Agows; but, partly by the war with the Galla beyond the Nile, partly by their own conſtant rebellions, this territory, called Maitſha, which is the flat country on both ſides of the Nile, is quite uninhabited, and at laſt hath been given to colonies of peaceable Galla, chiefly Djawi, who fill the whole low country to the foot of the mountains Aformaſha, in place of the Agows, the firſt occupiers.

Maitsha, from the flatneſs of the country, not draining ſoon after the rains, is in all places wet, but in many, miry and marſhy; it produces little or no corn, but depends entirely upon a plant called Enſete*, which furniſhes the people both with wholeſome and delicate food throughout the year. For the reſt, this province abounds in large fine cattle, and breeds ſome indifferent horſes.

Upon the mountains, above Maitſha, is the country of the Agows, the richeſt province ſtill in Abyſſinia, notwithſtanding the multitude of devaſtations it has ſuffered. They lie round the country above deſcribed, from Aformaſha to Quaquera, where are the heads of two large rivers, the Kelti and Branti. Theſe are called the Agows of Damot, from their nearneſs to that province, in contradiſtinction to the Agows of Laſta, who are called Tcheratz-Agow, from Tchera, a principal town, tribe, and diſtrict near Laſta and Begemder.

The Gafats, inhabiting a ſmall diſtrict adjoining to the Galla, have alſo diſtinct languages, ſo have the Galla themſelves, of whom we have often ſpoken; they are a large nation.

From Dingleber all along the lake, below the mountains bounding Gueſgué and Kuara, is called Dembea. This low province on the ſouth of Gondar, and Woggora the ſmall high province on the eaſt, are all ſown with wheat, and are the granaries of Abyſſinia. Dembea ſeems once to have been occupied entirely by the lake, and we ſee all over it marks that cannot be miſtaken, ſo that this large extent of water is viſibly upon the decreaſe; and this agrees with what is obſerved of ſtagnant pools in general throughout the world. Dembea is called Atté-Kolla, *the king's food*, or maintenance, its produce being aſſigned for the ſupplying of the king's houſehold. It is governed by an officer called Cantiba; it is a lucrative poſt; but he is not reckoned one of the great officers of the empire, and has no place in council.

---

* See the article enſete in the appendix.

South from Dembea is Kuara, a very mountainous province confining upon the Pagan blacks, or Shangalla, called Gongas and Guba, the Macrobii of the ancients. It is a very unwholeſome province, but abounding in gold, not of its own produce, but that of its neighbourhood, theſe Pagans—Guba, Nuba, and Shangalla. Kuara ſignifies the ſun, and Beja (that is Atbara, and the low parts of Sennaar, the country of the Shepherds, adjoining) ſignifies the *moon*, in the language of theſe Shangalla. Theſe names are ſome remains of their ancient ſuperſtitions. Kuara was the native country of the Iteghè, or queen-regent, of Kaſmati Eſhté, Welled de l'Oul, Gueta, Euſebius, and Palambaras Mammo.

In the low country of Kuara, near to Sennaar, there is a ſettlement of Pagan blacks called Ganjar. They are moſtly cavalry, and live entirely by hunting and plundering the Arabs of Atbara and Fazuclo. Their origin is this: Upon the invaſion of the Arabs after the coming of Mahomet, the black ſlaves deſerted from their maſters, the Shepherds, and took up their habitation, where they have not conſiderably multiplied, otherwiſe than by the acceſſion of vagrants and fugitives, whom they get from both kingdoms. They are generally under the command of the governor of Kuara, and were ſo when I was in Abyſſinia, though they refuſed to follow their governor Coque Abou Barea to fight againſt Michael, but whether from fear or affection I know not; I believe the former.

The governor of Kuara is one of the great officers of ſtate, and, being the king's lieutenant-general, has abſolute power in his province, and carries *ſendick* and *nagareet*. His kettle-drums are ſilver, and his privilege is to beat theſe drums even in marching through the capital, which no governor of a province is permitted to do, none but the king's nagareets or kettle-drums being ſuffered to be beat there, or any where in a town where the king is; but the governor of Kuara is intitled to continue beating his drums till he comes to the foot of the outer ſtair of the king's palace. This privilege, from ſome good behaviour of the firſt officer to whom the command was given, was conferred upon the poſt by David II. called Degami Daid, who conquered the province from the *Shepherds*, its old inhabitants.

Nara, and Ras el Feel, Tchelga, and on to Tcherkin, is a frontier wholly inhabited by Mahometans. Its government is generally given to a ſtranger, often to a Mahometan, but one of that faith is always deputy-governor. The uſe of keeping troops here is to defend the friendly Arabs and Shepherds, who remain in their allegiance to Abyſſinia, from the reſentment of the Arabs of Sennaar, their neighbours; and, by means of theſe friendly Arabs and Shepherds, ſecure a cona conſtant ſupply of horſes for the king's troops. It is a barren ſtripe of a very hot, unwholeſome country, full of thick woods, and fit only for hunting. The inhabitants, fugitives from all nations, are chiefly Mahometans, but very bold and expert horſemen, uſing no other weapon but the broad ſword, with which they attack the elephant and rhinoceros.

There are many other ſmall provinces, which occaſionally are annexed, and ſometimes are ſeparated, ſuch as Gueſgué, to the eaſtward of Kuara; Waldubba, between the rivers Guangue and Angrab; Tzegadé and Walkayt on the weſt ſide of Waldubba; Abergalè and Selawa in the neighbourhood of Begemder; Temben, Dobas, Giannamora, Bur, and Engana, in the neighbourhood of Tigré, and many others: Such at leaſt was the ſtate of the country in my time, very different in all reſpects from what it has been repreſented. As to the precedency of theſe provinces we ſhall further ſpeak, when we come to mention the officers of ſtate and internal government in this country.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Various Cuſtoms in Abyſſinia ſimilar to thoſe in Perſia, &c.—A bloody Banquet deſcribed, &c.

FOR the ſake of regularity, I ſhall here notice what might clearly be inferred from what is gone before. The crown of Abyſſinia is hereditary, and has always been ſo, in one particular family, ſuppoſed to be that of Solomon by the queen of Saba, Negeſta Azab, or queen of the ſouth. It is nevertheleſs elective in this line; and there is no law of the land, nor cuſtom, which gives the eldeſt ſon an excluſive title to ſucceed to his father.

THE practice has indeed been quite the contrary: when, at the death of a king, his ſons are old enough to govern, and, by ſome accident, not yet ſent priſoners to the mountain, then the eldeſt, or he that is next, and not confined, generally takes poſſeſſion of the throne by the ſtrength of his father's friends; but if no heir is then in the low country, the choice of the king is always according to the will of the miniſter, which paſſes for that of the people; and, his inclination and intereſt being to govern, he never fails to chooſe an infant whom thereafter he directs, ruling the kingdom abſolutely during the minority, which generally exhauſts, or is equal to the term of his life.

FROM this flow all the misfortunes of this unhappy country. This very defect ariſes from a deſire to inſtitute a more than ordinary perfect form of government; for the Abyſſinians firſt poſition was, "Woe be to the kingdom whoſe king is a child;" and this they know muſt often happen when ſucceſſion is left to the courſe of nature. But when there was a choice to be made out of two hundred perſons all of the ſame family, all capable of reigning, it was their own fault, they thought, if they had not always a prince of proper age and qualification to rule the kingdom, according to the neceſſities of the times, and to preſerve the ſucceſſion of the family in the houſe of Solomon, agreeable to the laws of the land. And indeed it has been this manner of reaſoning, good at firſt view, though found afterwards but too fallacious, which has ruined their kingdom in part; and often brought the whole into the utmoſt hazard and jeopardy.

THE king is anointed with plain oil of olives, which, being poured upon the crown of his head, he rubs into his long hair indecently enough with both his hands, pretty much as his ſoldiers do with theirs when they get acceſs to plenty of butter.

The crown is made in the ſhape of a prieſt's mitre, or head-piece; it is a kind of helmet, covering the king's forehead, cheeks, and neck. It is lined with blue taffety; the outſide is half gold and half ſilver, of the moſt beautiful filligrane work.

The crown, in Joas's time, was burnt, with part of the palace, on that day when Ras Michael's dwarf was ſhot in his own houſe before him. The preſent was ſince made by the Greeks from Smyrna, who have large appointments here, and work with very great taſte and elegance, though they have not near ſo much encouragement as formerly.

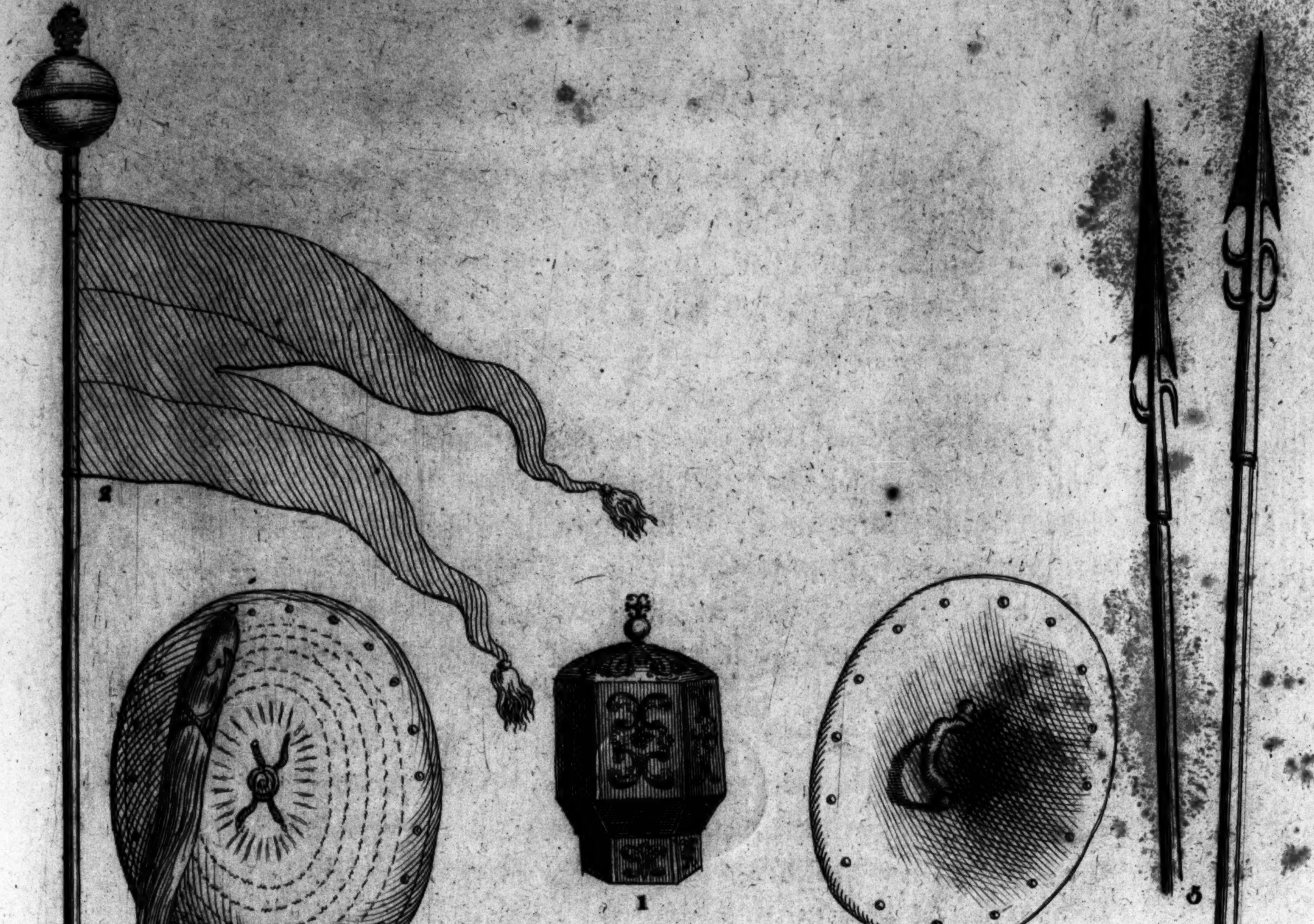
Upon the top of the crown was a ball of red glaſs, or chryſtal, with ſeveral bells of different colours within it. It ſeems to me to have formerly been no better than part of the ſtopper of a glaſs-decanter. Be that as it may, it was loſt in Yaſous's time at the defeat of Sennaar, It was found, however, by a Mahometan, and brought by Guangoul, chief of the Bertuma Galla, to the frontiers of Tigrè, where Michael, governor of that province, went with an army in great ceremony to receive it, and, returning with it, gave it to king Yaſous, making thereby a great advance towards the king's favour.

Some people *, among the other unwarranted things they have advanced, have ſaid, That, at the king's coronation, a gold ear-ring is put into his ears, and a drawn ſword into his hand, and that all the people fall down and worſhip

him;

---

* Vid. Le Grande's Hiſt. of Abyſſinia.



1 *Crown*
2 *Standard*
3 *Shield outside*
4 *Shield inside*

5 *Javelins*
6 *Ornament after victory of all Kasmatis*
7 *Silver Diſc worn on Feſtivals by ſoldiers of Quality.*

London Publish'd Decr. 1st 1789, by G. Robinson & Co.

The crown is made in the ſhape of a prieſt's mitre, or head-piece; it is a kind of helmet, covering the king's forehead, cheeks, and neck. It is lined with blue taffety; the outſide is half gold and half ſilver, of the moſt beautiful filligrane work.

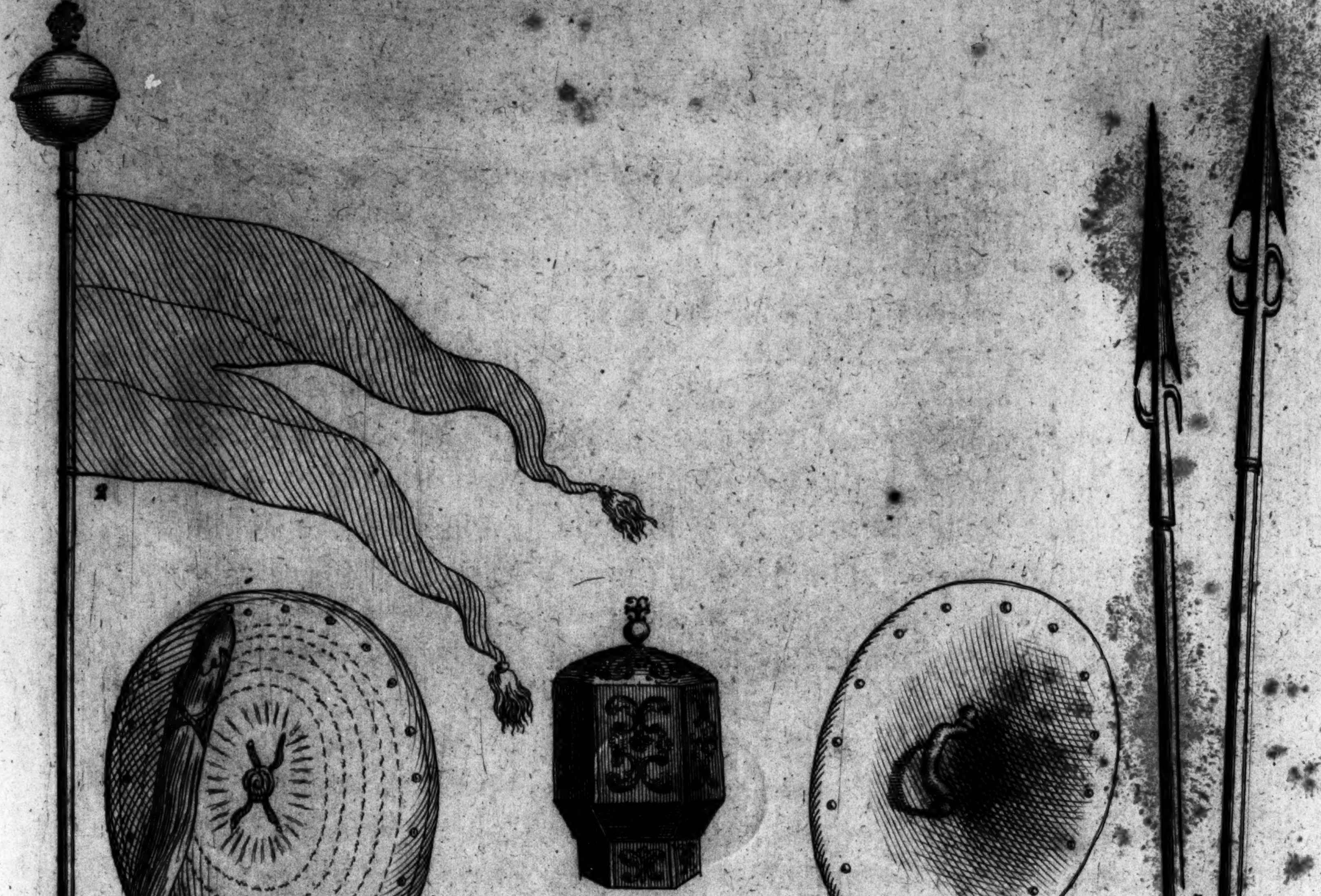
The crown, in Joas's time, was burnt, with part of the palace, on that day when Ras Michael's dwarf was ſhot in his own houſe before him. The preſent was ſince made by the Greeks from Smyrna, who have large appointments here, and work with very great taſte and elegance, though they have not near ſo much encouragement as formerly.

Upon the top of the crown was a ball of red glaſs, or chryſtal, with ſeveral bells of different colours within it. It ſeems to me to have formerly been no better than part of the ſtopper of a glaſs-decanter. Be that as it may, it was loſt in Yaſous's time at the defeat of Sennaar. It was found, however, by a Mahometan, and brought by Guangoul, chief of the Bertuma Galla, to the frontiers of Tigrè, where Michael, governor of that province, went with an army in great ceremony to receive it, and, returning with it, gave it to king Yaſous, making thereby a great advance towards the king's favour.

Some people *, among the other unwarranted things they have advanced, have ſaid, That, at the king's coronation, a gold ear-ring is put into his ears, and a drawn ſword into his hand, and that all the people fall down and worſhip him;

---

* Vid. Le Grande's Hiſt. of Abyſſinia.



1 *Crown*
2 *Standard*
3 *Shield outside*
4 *Shield inside*

5 *Javelins*
6 *Ornament after victory of all Kasmatis*
7 *Silver Disc worn on Festivals by*
soldiers of Quality.

London. Publish'd Dec.r 1.st 1789, by G. Robinson & Co.

him; but there is no ſuch ceremony in uſe, and exhibitions of this kind, made by the king in public, at no period ſeem to have ſuited the genius of this people. Formerly his face was never ſeen, nor any part of him, excepting ſometimes his foot. He ſits in a kind of balcony, with lattice-windows and curtains before him. Even yet he covers his face on audiences or public occaſions, and when in judgment. On caſes of treaſon, he ſits within his balcony, and ſpeaks through a hole in the ſide of it, to an officer called Kal-Hatzé, the "voice or word of the king," by whom he ſends his queſtions, or any thing elſe that occurs, to the judges who are ſeated at the council-table.

The king goes to church regularly, his guards taking poſſeſſion of every avenue and door through which he is to paſs, and nobody is allowed to enter with him, becauſe he is then on foot, excepting two officers of his bed-chamber who ſupport him. He kiſſes the threſhold and ſide-poſts of the church-door, the ſteps before the altar, and then returns home: ſometimes there is ſervice in the church, ſometimes there is not; but he takes no notice of the difference. He rides up ſtairs into the preſence-chamber on a mule, and lights immediately on the carpet before his throne; and I have ſometimes ſeen great indecencies committed by the ſaid mule in the preſence-chamber, upon a Perſian carpet.

An officer called Serach Maſſery, with a long whip, begins cracking and making a noiſe, worſe than twenty French poſtillions, at the door of the palace before the dawn of day. This chaſes away the hyæna and other wild beaſts; this, too, is the ſignal for the king's riſing, who ſits in judgment

ment every morning faſting, and after that, about eight o'clock, he goes to breakfaſt.

THERE are ſix noblemen of the king's own chooſing, who are called Baalomaal*, or gentlemen of his bed-chamber; four of theſe are always with him. There is a ſeventh, who is the chief of theſe, called Azeleſſa el Camiſha, groom of the robe, or ſtole. He is keeper of the king's wardrobe, and the firſt officer of the bed-chamber. Theſe officers, the black ſlaves, and ſome others, ſerve him as menial ſervants, and are in a degree of familiarity with him unknown to the reſt of the ſubjects.

WHEN the king ſits to conſult upon civil matters of conſequence, he is ſhut up in a kind of box oppoſite to the head of the council table. The perſons that deliberate ſit at the table, and, according to their rank, give their voices, the youngeſt or loweſt officer always ſpeaking firſt. The firſt that give their votes are the Shalaka, or colonels of the houſehold-troops. The ſecond are the great butlers, men that have the charge of the king's drink. The third is the Badjerund, or keeper of that apartment in the palace called the *lion's houſe*; and after theſe the keeper of the banqueting-houſe. The next is called Lika Magwaſs, an officer that always goes before the king to hinder the preſſure of the crowd. In war, when the king is marching, he rides conſtantly round him at a certain diſtance, and carries his ſhield, and his lance; at leaſt he carries a ſilver ſhield, and a lance pointed with the ſame metal, before ſuch kings as do not chooſe to expoſe their perſon. That, however, was not the caſe in my time, as the king carried the ſhield himſelf, black and unadorned, ed, of good buffalo's hide, and his ſpear ſharp-pointed with iron. His ſilver ornaments were only uſed when the campaign was over, when theſe were carried by this officer. Great was the reſpect ſhewed formerly to this king in war, and even when engaged in battle with rebels, his own ſubjects.

---

* Baalomaal, which, literally tranſlated, is, Maſter of his effects, or goods.

No prince ever loſt his life in battle till the coming of the Europeans into Abyſſinia, when both the excommunicating and murdering of their ſovereigns ſeem to have been introduced at the ſame time. The reader will ſee, in the courſe of this hiſtory, two inſtances of this reſpect being ſtill kept up: the one at the battle of Limjour, where Faſil, pretending that he was immediately to attack Ras Michael, deſired that the king might be dreſſed in his inſignia, leſt, not being known, he might be ſlain by the ſtranger Galla. The next was after the battle of Serbraxos, where the king was thrice in one day engaged with the Begemder troops for a conſiderable ſpace of time. Theſe inſignia, or marks of royalty, are a white horſe, with ſmall ſilver bells at his head, a ſhield of ſilver, and a white fillet of fine ſilk or muſlin, but generally the latter, ſome inches broad, which is tied round the upper part of the head over his hair, with a large double or bow-knot behind, the ends hanging down to the ſmall of his back, or elſe flying in the air.

After the Lika Magwaſs comes the Palambaras; after him the Fit-Auraris; then the Gera Kaſmati, and the Kanya Kaſmati, their names being derived from their rank or order in encamping, the one on the right, the other on the left of the king's tent; Kanya and Gera ſignifying *the right* and *the left*; after them the Dakakin Billetana Gueta, or the under

chamberlain.

chamberlain; then the ſecretary* for the king's commands; after him the right and left Azages, or generals; after them Rak Maſſery, after him the baſha, after him Kaſmati of Damot, then of Samen, then Amhara, and, laſt of all, Tigrè, before whom ſtands a golden cup upon a cuſhion, and he is called Nebrit, as being governor of Axum, or keeper of the book of the law ſuppoſed to be there.

After the governor of Tigrè comes the Acab Saat, or guardian of the fire, and the chief eccleſiaſtical officer of the king's houſehold. Some have ſaid that this officer was appointed to attend the king at the time of eating, and that it was his province to order both meat and drink to be withdrawn whenever he ſaw the king inclined to exceſs. If this was really his office, he never uſed it in my time, nor, as far as I could learn, for ſeveral reigns before. Beſides, no king eats in public, or before any perſon but ſlaves; and he never would chuſe that time to commit exceſs, in which he might be controuled by a ſubject, even if it was that ſubject's right to be preſent when the king eats, as it is not.

After the Acab Saat comes the firſt maſter of the houſehold; then the Betwudet, or Ras; laſt of all the king gives his ſentence, which is final, and ſends it to the table, from the balcony where he is then ſitting, by the officer called, as aforementioned, Kal-Hatzè.

We meet in Abyſſinia with various uſages, which many have hitherto thought to be peculiar to thoſe ancient nations in which they were firſt obſerved; others, not ſo learned, have thought they originated in Abyſſinia. I ſhall firſt take notice of thoſe that regard the king and court.

---

* Hatzé Azazé.

The kings of Perſia*, like theſe we are ſpeaking of, were eligible in one family only, that of the Arſacidæ, and it was not till that race failed they choſe Darius. The title of the king of Abyſſinia is, *King of Kings*; and ſuch Daniel † tells us was that of Nebuchadnezzar. The right of primogeniture does not ſo prevail in Abyſſinia as to exclude election in the perſon of the younger brothers, and this was likewiſe the caſe in Perſia ‡.

In Perſia § a preference was underſtood to be due to the king's lawful children; but there were inſtances of the natural child being preferred to the lawful one. Darius, tho' a baſtard, was preferred to Iſogius, Xerxes's lawful ſon, and that merely by the election of the people. The ſame has always obtained in Abyſſinia. A very great part of their kings are adulterous baſtards; others are the iſſue of concubines, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, but they have been preferred to the crown by the influence of a party, always under name of the Voice of the People.

Although the Perſian kings ‖ had various palaces to which they removed at different times in the year, Paſagarda, the metropolis of their ancient kings, was obſerved as the only place for their coronation; and this, too, was the caſe of Abyſſinia with their metropolis of Axum.

---

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 783. Joſeph. lib. xviii. cap. 3. Procop. lib. i. de Bel Pers.

† Dan. chap. ii.

‡ Procop. lib. i. cap. 11.

§ Arrian, lib. ii. cap. 14.

‖ Plut. in Artax. lib. xv. p. 730.

The next remarkable ceremony in which theſe two nations agreed, is that of adoration, inviolably obſerved in Abyſſinia to this day, as often as you enter the ſovereign's preſence. This is not only kneeling*, but an abſolute proſtration. You firſt fall upon your knees, then upon the palms of your hands, then incline your head and body till your forehead touch the earth; and, in caſe you have an anſwer to expect, you lie in that poſture till the king, or ſomebody from him, deſires you to riſe. This, too, was the cuſtom of Perſia; Arrian† ſays this was firſt inſtituted by Cyrus, and this was preciſely the poſture in which they adored God, mentioned in the book of Exodus.

Though the refuſal of this ceremony would, in Abyſſinia and Perſia, be looked upon as rebellion or inſult, yet it ſeems in both nations to have met with a mitigation with regard to ſtrangers, who have refuſed it without giving any offence. I remember a Mahometan being twice ſent by the prince of Mecca into Abyſſinia during my ſtay there, who, neither time, would go farther than to put his hands acroſs upon his breaſt, with no very great inclination of his head; and this I ſaw was not thought ſo extraordinary as to give offence, as it was all he did to his own ſovereign and maſter.

We read, indeed, of a very remarkable inſtance of the diſpenſing with that ceremony being indirectly, yet plainly,

---

* Lucretius, lib. v. Ovid. Metam. lib. i. Lucian, in Navig.

† Arrian, lib. iv. cap. 11. Exod. chap. 4. Matth. chap. 2.

ly, refuſed in Perſia to ſtrangers. Conon *, the Athenian, had occaſion for an interview with Artaxerxes, king of Perſia, upon matters of great concern to both ſtates; "You ſhall be introduced to the king by me, ſays the Perſian miniſter to Conon, without any delay; do you only firſt conſider with yourſelf, whether it is really of any conſequence that you ſhould ſpeak with the king yourſelf, or whether it would not be as well for you to convey to him, by letter, any thing you have to ſay; for it is abſolutely neceſſary, if you are introduced into the king's preſence, that you fall down upon your face and worſhip him. If this is diſagreeable or offenſive to you, your buſineſs ſhall nevertheleſs be equally well and quickly done by me." To which Conon very ſenſibly replied; "For my part, it never can be offenſive *to me* to ſhew every degree of reſpect poſſible to the perſon of a king. I only am afraid that this ſalutation may be miſinterpreted by my citizens, who, being themſelves a ſovereign ſtate, may look upon this ſubmiſſion of their ambaſſador as a reproach to themſelves, and inconſiſtent with their independency." Conon, therefore, deſired to wave his introduction, and that his buſineſs might be done by letters, which was complied with accordingly.

I HAVE already mentioned tranſiently the circumſtance of the king not being ſeen when ſitting in council. The manner of it is this: When he had buſineſs formerly, he ſat conſtantly in a room of his palace, which communicated with the audience and council by two folding doors or large windows, the bottom of which were about three ſteps from the ground. Theſe doors, or windows, were latticed with croſs bars of wood like a cage, and a thin curtain, or veil of taffety ſilk was hung within it; ſo that, upon darkening the inner chamber, the king ſaw every perſon in the chamber without, while he himſelf was not ſeen at all. Juſtin * tells us, that the perſon of the king of Perſia was hid to give a greater idea of his majeſty; and under Deioces, king of the Medes, a law was made that nobody might look upon the king; but the conſtant wars in which Abyſſinia has been engaged, ſince the Mahometans took poſſeſſion of Adel, have occaſioned this troubleſome cuſtom to be wholly laid aſide, unleſs on particular public occaſions, and at council, when they are ſtill obſerved with the ancient ſtrictneſs. And we find, in the hiſtory of Abyſſinia, that the army and kingdom have often owed their ſafety to the perſonal behaviour and circumſtance of the king diſtinguiſhing and expoſing himſelf in battle, which advantage they muſt have loſt had the ancient cuſtom been obſerved. However, to this day, when he is abroad riding, or ſitting in any of his apartments at home where people are admitted, his head and forehead are perfectly covered, and one of his hands covers his mouth, ſo that nothing but his eyes are ſeen; his feet, too, are always covered.

---

* Juſtin, lib. vi. Omil. Prob.

We learn from Apuleus, that this was a cuſtom in Perſia; and this gave an opportunity to the magi to place Oropaſtus, the brother of Cambyſes, upon the throne, inſtead of Merdis who ſhould have ſucceeded; but the covering of the face made the difference paſs unperceived.

---

* Juſtin, lib. 2.

It is the conſtant practice in Abyſſinia to beſet the king's doors and windows within his hearing, and there, from early morning to night, to cry for juſtice as loud as poſſible, in a diſtreſſed and complaining tone, and in all the different languages they are maſters of, in order to their being admitted to have their ſuppoſed grievances heard. In a country ſo ill governed as Abyſſinia is, and ſo perpetually involved in war, it may be eaſily ſuppoſed there is no want of people, who have real injuries and violence to complain of: But if it were not ſo, this is ſo much the conſtant uſage, that when it happens (as in the midſt of the rainy ſeaſon) that few people can approach the capital, or ſtand without in ſuch bad weather, a ſet of vagrants are provided, maintained, and paid, whoſe ſole buſineſs it is to cry and lament, as if they had been really very much injured and oppreſſed; and this they tell you is for the king's honour, that he may not be lonely by the palace being too quiet. This, of all their abſurd cuſtoms, was the moſt grievous and troubleſome to me; and, from a knowledge that it was ſo, the king, when he was private, often permitted himſelf a piece of rather odd diverſion to be a royal one.

There would ſometimes, while I was buſy in my room in the rainy ſeaſon, be four or five hundred people, who all at once would begin, ſome roaring and crying, as if they were in pain, others demanding juſtice, as if they were that moment ſuffering, or if in the inſtant to be put to death; and ſome groaning and ſobbing as if juſt expiring; and this horrid ſymphony was ſo artfully performed that no ear could diſtinguiſh but that it proceeded from real diſtreſs. I was often ſo ſurpriſed as to ſend the ſoldiers at the door to bring in one of them, thinking him come from the country, to examine who had injured him; many a time he was a ſervant of my own, or ſome other equally known; or, if he was a ſtranger, upon aſking him what misfortune had befallen him, he would anſwer very compoſedly, Nothing was the matter with him; that he had been ſleeping all day with the horſes; that hearing from the ſoldiers at the door I was retired to my apartment, he and his companions had come to cry and make a noiſe under my window, to do me *honour* before the people, for fear I ſhould be melancholy, by being too quiet when alone; and therefore hoped that I would order them drink, that they might continue with a little more ſpirit. The violent anger which this did often put me into did not fail to be punctually reported to the king, at which he would laugh heartily; and he himſelf was often hid not far off, for the ſake of being a ſpectator of my heavy diſpleaſure.

THESE complaints, whether real or feigned, have always for their burden, *Rete O Jan boi*, which, repeated quick, very much reſembles Prete Janni, the name that was given to this prince, of which we never yet knew the derivation; its ſignification is, "Do me juſtice, O my king!"

HERODOTUS [*] tells us, that in Perſia, the people, in great crowds and of both ſexes, come roaring and crying to the doors of the palace; and Intaphernes is alſo ſaid to come to the door of the king making great lamentations.

I HAVE

---

[*] Herod. lib. iii.

I HAVE mentioned a council of ſtate held in Abyſſinia in time of danger or difficulty, where the king ſitting inviſible, though preſent, gives his opinion by an officer called Kal-Hatzè. Upon his delivering the ſentence from the king the whole aſſembly riſe, and ſtand upon their feet; and this they muſt have done the whole time the council laſted had the king appeared there in perſon. According to the circumſtances of the time, the king goes with the majority, or not; and if, upon a diviſion, there is a majority againſt him, he often puniſhes the majority on the other ſide, by ſending them to priſon for voting againſt his ſentiments; for tho' it is underſtood, by calling of the meeting, that the majority is to determine as to the eligibility of the meaſure, the king, by his prerogative, ſuperſedes any majority on the other ſide, and ſo far, I ſuppoſe, has been an encroachment upon the original conſtitution. This I underſtand was the ſame in Perſia.

XERXES *, being about to declare war againſt the Greeks, aſſembled all the principal chiefs of Aſia in council. "That I may not, ſays he, be *thought* to *act* only by my own judgment, I have called you together. At the ſame time, I think proper to intimate to you, that it is your duty to obey my will, rather than enter into any deliberation or remonſtrances of your own."

WE will now compare ſome particulars, the dreſs and ornaments of the two kings. The king of Abyſſinia wears his hair long; ſo did the ancient kings of Perſia. We learn this

---

* Herod. lib. vi.

this circumſtance from Suetonius and Aurelius Victor[*]. A comet had appeared in the war with Perſia, and was looked upon by the Romans as a bad omen. Veſpaſian laughed at it, and ſaid, if it portended any ill it was to the king of Perſia, becauſe, *like him*, it wore long hair.

The diadem was, with the Perſians, a mark of royalty, as with the Abyſſinians, being compoſed of the ſame materials, and worn in the ſame manner. The king of Abyſſinia wears it, while marching, as a mark of ſovereignty, that does not impede or incommode him, as any other heavier ornament would do, eſpecially in hot weather. This fillet ſurrounds his head above the hair, leaving the crown perfectly uncovered. It is an offence of the firſt magnitude for any perſon, at this time, to wear any thing upon his head, eſpecially white, unleſs for Mahometans, who wear caps, and over them a large white turban; or for prieſts, who wear large turbans of muſlin alſo.

This was the diadem of the Perſians, as appears from Lucian[†], who calls it a white fillet about the forehead. In the dialogue between Diogenes and Alexander, the head is ſaid to be tied round with a white fillet[‡]; and Favorinus, ſpeaking of Pompey, whoſe leg was wound round with a white bandage, ſays, It is no matter on what part of the body he wears a diadem. We read in Juſtin[‖], that Alexander, leaping from his horſe, by accident wounded Lyſimachus in the forehead with the point of his ſpear, and the blood guſhed out ſo violently that it could not be ſtanched, till the king took the diadem from his head, and with it bound up the wound; which at that time was looked upon as an omen that Lyſimachus was to be king, and ſo it ſoon after happened.

---

[*] Suet. Veſpaſ. cap. 23, Sex. Aurel. Victor, cap. 23.

[†] Lucian. de Votis ceu in Navigio, Eſdras, lib. iii.

[‡] Valer. Maxim. lib. vi. cap. 2.

[‖] Juſtin lib. xv.

THE kings of Abyſſinia anciently ſat upon a gold throne, which is a large, convenient, oblong, ſquare ſeat, like a ſmall bed-ſtead, covered with Perſian carpets, damaſk, and cloth of gold, with ſteps leading up to it. It is ſtill richly gilded; but the many revolutions and wars have much abridged their ancient magnificence. The portable throne was a gold ſtool, like that curule ſtool or chair uſed by the Romans, which we ſee on medals. It was, in the Begemder war, changed to a very beautiful one of the ſame form inlaid with gold. Xerxes is ſaid to have been ſpectator of a naval fight ſitting upon a gold ſtool*.

IT is, in Abyſſinia, high-treaſon to ſit upon any ſeat of the king's; and he that preſumed to do this would be inſtantly hewn to pieces, if there was not ſome other collateral proof of his being a madman. The reader will find, in the courſe of my hiſtory, a very ridiculous accident on this ſubject, in the king's tent, with Guangoul, king of the Bertuma Galla.

IT is probable that Alexander had heard of this law in Perſia, and diſapproved of it; for one day, it being extremely cold, the king, ſitting in his chair before the fire, warming

---

[*] Philoſtrat. lib. ii.

ing and chaffing his legs, ſaw a ſoldier, probably a Perſian, who had loſt his feeling by extreme numbneſs. The king immediately leaped from his chair, and ordered the ſoldier to be ſet down upon it. The fire ſoon brought him to his ſenſes, but he had almoſt loſt them again with fear, by finding himſelf in the king's ſeat. To whom Alexander ſaid, "Remember, and diſtinguiſh, how much more advantageous to man my government is than that of the kings of Perſia*. By ſitting down on my ſeat, you have ſaved your life; by ſitting on theirs, you would infallibly have loſt it."

In Abyſſinia it is conſidered as a fundamental law of the land, that none of the royal family, who has any deformity or bodily defect, ſhall be allowed to ſucceed to the crown; and, for this purpoſe, any of the princes, who may have eſcaped from the mountain of Wechnè, and who are afterwards taken, are mutilated in ſome of their members, that thus they may be diſqualified from ever ſucceeding. In Perſia the ſame was obſerved. Procopius † tells us, that Zames, the ſon of Cabades, was excluded from the throne becauſe he was blind of one eye, the law of Perſia prohibiting any perſon that had a bodily defect to be elected king.

The kings of Abyſſinia were ſeldom ſeen by their ſubjects. Juſtin ‡ ſays, the Perſians hid the perſon of their king to increaſe their reverence for his majeſty. And it was a law of Deioces §, king of the Medes, that nobody ſhould be permitted

---

[*] Val. Max. lib. v. cap. 16.—Q. Curt. lib. viii.

[†] Procop. lib. i. cap. 11.

[‡] Juſtin. lib. i.

[§] Herod. lib. i.

permitted to ſee the king; which regulation was as ancient as the time of Semiramis, whoſe ſon, Ninyas, is ſaid to have grown old in the palace, without ever having been known by being ſeen out of it.

This abſurd uſage gave riſe to many abuſes. In Perſia* it produced two officers, who were called the king's eyes, and the king's ear, and who had the dangerous employment, I mean dangerous for the ſubject, of ſeeing and hearing for their ſovereign. In Abyſſinia, as I have juſt ſaid, it created an officer called the king's mouth, or voice, for, being ſeen by nobody, he ſpoke of courſe in the third perſon, "*Hear what the king ſays to you*, which is the uſual form of all regal mandates in Abyſſinia; and what follows has the force of law. In the ſame ſtile, Joſephus thus begins an edict of Cyrus king of Perſia, "Cyrus the king ſays†,"—And ſpeaking of Cambyſes's reſcript, "Cambyſes the *king ſays thus*,"—And Eſdras alſo, "Thus ſaith Cyrus king of Perſia‡,"—And Nebuchadnezzar ſays to Holofernes, "Thus ſaith the Great King, Lord of the whole earth§;"—and this was probably the origin of *edicts*, when writing was little uſed by ſovereigns, and little underſtood by the ſubject.

Solemn hunting-matches were always in uſe both with the kings of Abyſſinia and thoſe of Perſia‖. In both kingdoms it was a crime for a ſubject to ſtrike the game till ſuch time as the king had thrown his lance at it. This abſurd cuſtom was repealed by Artaxerxes Longimanus in one kingdom;

---

* Dio. Chryſoſt. Orat. 3. pro regno. † Joſeph. lib. xi. cap. 1. ‡ Eſdras, cap. 5. § Judith, cap. 2. ‖ Cteſias in Perſicis. Xenephon, lib. i.

kingdom*, and by Yaſous the Great in the other, ſo late as the beginning of the laſt century.

The kings of Abyſſinia are above all laws. They are ſupreme in all cauſes eccleſiaſtical and civil; the land and perſons of their ſubjects are equally their property, and every inhabitant of their kingdom is born their ſlave; if he bears a higher rank it is by the king's gift; for his neareſt relations are accounted nothing better. The ſame obtained in Perſia. Ariſtotle calls the Perſian generals and nobles, ſlaves of the great king†. Xerxes, reproving Pytheus the Lydian when ſeeking to excuſe one of his ſons from going to war, ſays, "You that are my ſlave, and bound to follow me with your wife and all your family‡."—And Gobryas§ ſays to Cyrus, "I deliver myſelf to you, at once your companion and your ſlave."

There are ſeveral kinds of bread in Abyſſinia, ſome of different ſorts of teff, and ſome of tocuſſo, which alſo vary in quality. The king of Abyſſinia eats of wheat bread, though not of every wheat, but of that only that grows in the province of Dembea, therefore called the king's food. It was ſo with the kings of Perſia, who ate wheat bread, Herodotus ſays, but only of a particular kind, as we learn from Strabo‖.

I have ſhewn, in the courſe of the foregoing hiſtory, that it always has been, and ſtill is the cuſtom of the kings of

---

* Plutarch, in Apothegmat. † De Mundo. ‡ Herod lib. vii. § Xenoph. lib. iv. ‖ Strabo lib. xv.

Abyſſinia, to marry what number of wives they chooſe; that theſe were not, therefore, all queens; but that among them there was one who was conſidered particularly as queen, and upon her head was placed the crown, and ſhe was called Iteghè.

Thus, in Perſia, we read that Ahaſuerus loved Eſther*, who had found grace in his ſight more than the other virgins, and he had placed a golden crown upon her head. And Joſephus † informs us, that, when Eſther‡ was brought before the king, he was exceedingly delighted with her, and made her his lawful wife, and when ſhe came into the palace he put a crown upon her head: whether placing the crown upon the queen's head had any civil effect as to regency in Perſia as it had in Abyſſinia, is what hiſtory does not inform us.

I have already obſerved, that there is an officer called Serach Maſſery, who watches before the king's gate all night, and at the dawn of day cracks a whip to chace the wild beaſts out of the town. This, too, is the ſignal for the king to riſe, and ſit down in his judgment-ſeat. The ſame cuſtom was obſerved in Perſia. Early in the morning an officer entered the king's chamber, and ſaid to him "Ariſe, O king! and take charge of thoſe matters which Oromaſdes has appointed you to the care of."

---

* Eſther, chap. ii. † Joſeph. lib. xi. cap. 6.

‡ If I remember right, it is D. Prideaux that ſays Eſther is a Perſian word, of no ſignification. I rather think it is Abyſſinian, becauſe it has a ſignification in that language. Eſhté, the maſculine, ſignifies an agreeable preſent, and is a proper name, of which Eſther is the feminine.

The king of Abyſſinia never is ſeen to walk, nor to ſet his foot upon the ground, out of his palace; and when he would diſmount from the horſe or mule on which he rides, he has a ſervant with a ſtool, who places it properly for him for that purpoſe. He rides into the anti-chamber to the foot of his throne, or to the ſtool placed in the alcove of his tent. We are told by Athenaeus *, ſuch was the practice in Perſia, whoſe king never ſet his foot upon the ground out of his palace.

The king of Abyſſinia very often judges capital crimes himſelf. It is reckoned a favourable judicature, ſuch as, Claudian ſays, that of a king in perſon ſhould be, "*Piger ad pœnas, ad præmia velox.*" No man is condemned by the king in perſon to die for the firſt fault, unleſs the crime be of a horrid nature, ſuch as parricide or ſacrilege. And, in general, the life and merits of the priſoner are weighed againſt his immediate guilt; ſo that if his firſt behaviour has had more merit towards the ſtate than his preſent delinquency is thought to have injured it, the one is placed fairly againſt the other, and the accuſed is generally abſolved when the ſovereign judges alone.

Herodotus † praiſes this as a maxim of the kings of Perſia in capital judgments, almoſt in the very words that I have juſt now uſed; and he gives an inſtance of it:—Darius had condemned Sandoces, one of the king's judges, to be crucified for corruption, that is, for having given falſe judgment for a bribe. The man was already hung up on the croſs, when the king, conſidering with himſelf how many good ſervices he had done, previous to this, the only offence which he had committed, ordered him to be pardoned.

---

* Athen, lib. xii. cap. 2.

† Herod, lib. vii.

The Perſian king, in all expeditions, was attended by judges. We find in Herodotus *, that, in the expedition of Cambyſes, ten of the principal Egyptians were condemned to die by theſe judges for every Perſian that had been ſlain by the people of Memphis. Six judges always attend the king of Abyſſinia to the camp, and, before them, rebels taken on the field are tried and puniſhed on the ſpot.

People that the king diſtinguiſhed by favour, or for any public action, were in both kingdoms preſented with gold chains, ſwords, and bracelets †. Theſe in Abyſſinia are underſtood to be chiefly rewards of military ſervice; yet Poncet received a gold chain from Yaſous the Great. The day before the battle of Serbraxos, Ayto Engedan received a ſilver bridle and ſaddle, covered with ſilver plates, from Ras Michael; and the night after that battle I was myſelf honoured with a gold chain from the king upon my reconciliation with Guebra Maſcal, who, for his behaviour that day, had a large revenue moſt deſervedly aſſigned to him, and a conſiderable territory, conſiſting of a number of rich villages, a preſent known to be more agreeable to him than a mere mark of honour.

A stranger of faſhion, particularly recommended as I was, not needy in point of money, nor depending from day to day upon government for ſubſiſtence, is generally provided

---

* Herod. lib. iii.

† Xenoph. lib. i. Xenoph. lib. viii.

ded with one or more villages to furniſh him with what articles he may need, without being obliged to have recourſe to the king or his miniſters for every neceſſary. Amha Yaſous, prince of Shoa, had a large and a royal village, Emfras, given him to ſupply him with food for his table; he had another village in Karoota for wine; a village in Dembea, the king's own province, for his wheat; and another in Begemder for cotton cloths for his ſervants; and ſo of the reſt. After I was in the king's ſervice I had the villages that belonged to the poſts I occupied; and one called Geeſh, in which ariſes the ſources of the Nile, a village of about 18 houſes, given me by the king at my own requeſt; for I might have had a better to furniſh me with honey, and confirmed to me by the rebel Waragna Faſil, who never ſuffered me to grow rich by my rents, having never allowed me to receive but two large jars, ſo bitter with lupines that they were of no ſort of uſe to me. I was a gentle maſter, nor ever likely to be opulent from the revenues of that country; and more eſpecially ſo, as I had under me, as my lieutenant*, an officer commanding the horſe, whoſe thoughts were much more upon Jeruſalem and the holy ſepulchre than any gains he could get in Abyſſinia by his employments.

Thucydides † informs us, that Themiſtocles had received great gifts from Artaxerxes king of Perſia, when ſettled at Magneſia; the king had given him that city for bread, Lampſacus for wine, and Myuns to furniſh him with victuals. To theſe Athenaeus adds two more, Palæſcepſis and Percope, to yield him clothing and furniture. This preciſely, to this day, is the Abyſſinian idea, when they conceive they are entertaining men of rank; for ſtrangers, that come naked and vagabond among them, without name and character, or means of ſubſiſtence, ſuch as the Greeks in Abyſſinia, are always received as beggars, and neglected as ſuch, till hunger ſets their wits to work to provide for the preſent exigency, and low intrigues and practices are employed afterwards to maintain them in the little advancements which they have acquired, but no honour or confidence follows, or very rarely.

---

* Ammonios, Billetana Gueta to Ayto Confu.

† Thucyd. lib. i. Strabo, lib. xiv. Theod. Sic. lib. xi.

In Abyſſinia, when the priſoner is condemned in capital caſes, he is not again remitted to priſon, which is thought cruel, but he is immediately carried away, and the ſentence executed upon him. I have given ſeveral inſtances of this in the annals of the country. Abba Salama, the Acab Saat, was condemned by the king the morning he entered Gondar, on his return from Tigré, and immediately hanged, in the garment of a prieſt, on a tree at the door of the king's palace. Chremation, brother to the uſurper Socinios, was executed that ſame morning; Guebra Denghel, Ras Michael's ſon-in-law, was likewiſe executed that ſame day, immediately after judgment; and ſo were ſeveral others. The ſame was the practice in Perſia, as we learn from Xenophon [*], and more plainly from Diodorus [†].

---

[*] Xenoph. lib. i.

[†] Diod. lib. xii.

The capital puniſhments in Abyſſinia are the croſs. Socinios [*] firſt ordered Arzo, his competitor, who had fled for aſſiſtance and refuge to Phineas king of the Falaſha, to be crucified without the camp. We find the ſame puniſhment inflicted by Artaxerxes upon Haman [†], who was ordered to be affixed to the croſs till he died. And Polycrates of Samos, Cicero tells us [‡], was crucified by order of Orætis, prætor of Darius.

The next capital puniſhment is flaying alive. That this barbarous execution ſtill prevails in Abyſſinia is already proved by the fate of the unfortunate Wooſheka, taken priſoner in the campaign of 1769 while I was in Abyſſinia; a ſacrifice made to the vengeance of the beautiful Ozoro Eſther, who, kind and humane as ſhe was in other reſpects, could receive no atonement for the death of her huſband. Socrates [§] ſays, that Manes the heretic was flayed alive by order of the king of Perſia, and his ſkin made into a bottle. And Procopius [‖] informs us, that Pacurius ordered Baſicius to be flayed alive, and his ſkin made into a bottle and hung upon a high tree. And Agathias [*] mentions, that the ſame puniſhment was inflicted upon Nachorages *more majorum*, according to ancient cuſtom.

Lapidation, or ſtoning to death, is the next capital puniſhment in Abyſſinia. This is chiefly inflicted upon ſtrangers called *Franks*, for religious cauſes. The Catholic prieſts in Abyſſinia that have been detected there, in theſe latter days, have been ſtoned to death, and their bodies lie ſtill in the ſtreets of Gondar, in the ſquares or waſte-places, covered with the heaps of ſtones which occaſioned their death by being thrown at them. There are three of theſe heaps at the church of Abbo, all covering Franciſcan friars; and, beſides them, a ſmall pyramid over a boy who was ſtoned to death with them, about the firſt year of the reign of David the IV. * This boy was one of four ſons that one of the Franciſcan friars had had by an Abyſſinian woman in the reign of Ouſtas. In Perſia we find, that Pagoraſus (according to Cteſias †) was ſtoned to death by the order of the king; and the ſame author ſays, that Pharnacyas, one of the murderers of Xerxes, was ſtoned to death likewiſe.

---

[*] Vide annals of Abyſſinia, life of Socinios.

[†] Eſther, chap. vii, and viii.

[‡] Cicero, lib. v. de Finib.

[§] Eccleſiaſt. Hiſtor. chap. xxii.

[‖] Procop. lib. i. cap. 5. de Bell. Pers.

[*] Agath. lib. iii.

Among capital puniſhments may be reckoned likewiſe the plucking out of the eyes, a cruelty which I have but too often ſeen committed in the ſhort ſtay that I made in Abyſſinia. This is generally inflicted upon rebels. I have already mentioned, that, after the ſlaughter of the battle of Fagitta, twelve chiefs of the Pagan Galla, taken priſoners by Ras Michael, had their eyes torn out, and were afterwards abandoned to ſtarve in the valleys below the town. Several priſoners of another rank, noblemen of Tigré, underwent the ſame misfortune; and, what is wonderful, not one of them died in the operation, nor its conſequences, though performed in the coarſeſt manner with an iron forceps, or pincers.

Xenophon

---

* See this hiſtory of Abyſſinia in vit. David IV.

† Vide Cteſiani Hockerii.

Xenophon [*] tells us, that this was one of the puniſhments uſed by Cyrus. And Ammianus Marcellinus [†] mentions, that Sapor king of Perſia baniſhed Arſaces, whom he had taken priſoner to a certain caſtle, after having pulled out his eyes.

The dead bodies of criminals ſlain for treaſon, murder, and violence, on the high-way at certain times, are ſeldom buried in Abyſſinia. The ſtreets of Gondar are ſtrewed with pieces of their carcaſes, which bring the wild beaſts in multitudes into the city as ſoon as it becomes dark, ſo that it is ſcarcely poſſible for any to walk in the night. Too many inſtances of this kind will be found throughout my narrative. The dogs uſed to bring pieces of human bodies into the houſe, and court-yard, to eat them in greater ſecurity. This was moſt diſguſtful to me, but ſo often repeated, that I was obliged to leave them in poſſeſſion of ſuch fragments. We learn from Quintus Curtius [‡], that Darius having ordered Charidamus to be put to death, and finding afterwards that he was innocent, endeavoured to ſtop the executioner, though it was too late, as they had already cut his throat; but, in token of repentance, the king allowed him the liberty of burial.

I have taken notice, up and down throughout my hiſtory, that the Abyſſinians never fight in the night. This too was a rule among the Perſians [‖].

---

[*] Xenoph. lib. i.

[†] Amm. Mar. lib. vii.

[‡] Q. Curt. lib. iii. 2. 19.

[‖] Q. Curt. v. 12.

Notwithstanding the Abyſſinians were ſo anciently and nearly connected with Egypt, they never ſeem to have made uſe of paper, or papyrus, but imitated the practice of the Perſians, who wrote upon ſkins, and they do ſo this day. This ariſes from their having early been Jews. In Parthia, likewiſe, Pliny[*] informs us, the uſe of papyrus was abſolutely unknown; and though it was diſcovered that papyrus grew in the Euphrates, near Babylon, of which they could make paper, they obſtinately rather choſe to adhere to their ancient cuſtom of weaving their letters on cloth of which they made their garments. The Perſians, moreover, made uſe of parchment for their records[†], to which all their remarkable tranſactions were truſted; and to this it is probably owing we have ſo many of their cuſtoms preſerved to this day. Diodorus Siculus[‡], ſpeaking of Cteſias, ſays, he verified every thing from the royal parchments themſelves, which, in obedience to a certain law, are all placed in order, and afterwards were communicated to the Greeks.

From this great reſemblance in cuſtoms between the Perſians and Abyſſinians following the faſhionable way of judging about the origin of nations, I ſhould boldly conclude that the Abyſſinians were a colony of Perſians, but this is very well known to be without foundation. The cuſtoms, mentioned as only peculiar to Perſia, were common to all the eaſt; and they were loſt when thoſe countries were over-run and conquered by thoſe who introduced barbarous cuſtoms of their own. The reaſon why we have ſo much left

---

[*] Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. xiii. cap. 11. [†] Plin. lib. xiii. cap. 11. [‡] Diod. Sic. lib. ii.

left of the Perſian cuſtoms is, that they were written, and ſo not liable to alteration; and, being on parchment, did alſo contribute to their preſervation. The hiſtory which treats of thoſe ancient and poliſhed nations has preſerved few fragments of their manners entire from the ruins of time; while Abyſſinia, at war with nobody, or at war with itſelf only, has preſerved the ancient cuſtoms which it enjoyed in common with all the eaſt, and which were only loſt in other kingdoms by the invaſion of ſtrangers, a misfortune Abyſſinia has never ſuffered ſince the introduction of letters.

Before I finiſh what I have to ſay upon the manners of this nation, having ſhewn that they are the ſame people with the ancient Egyptians, I would inquire, whether there is the ſame conformity of rules in the dietetique regimen, between them and Egypt, that we ſhould expect to find from ſuch relation? This is a much ſurer way of judging than by reſemblance of external cuſtoms.

The old Egyptians, as we are told by ſacred ſcripture, did not eat with ſtrangers; but I believe the obſervation is extended farther than ever ſcripture meant. The inſtance given of Joſeph's brethren not being allowed to eat with the Egyptians was, becauſe Joſeph had told Pharaoh that his brethren [*], and Jacob his father, were ſhepherds, that he might get from the Egyptians the land of Goſhen, a land, as the name imports, of paſturage and graſs, which the Nile never overflowed, and it was therefore in poſſeſſion of the ſhepherds. Now the ſhepherds, we are told, were the direct natural enemies of the Egyptians who lived in towns. The ſhepherds alſo ſacrificed the god whom the Egyptians worſhipped. We cannot (ſays Moſes *) ſacrifice in this land the abomination of the Egyptians, leſt they ſtone us. If the Egyptians did not eat with them, ſo neither would they with the Egyptians; but it is a miſtake that the Egyptians did not eat fleſh as well as the ſhepherds, it was only the fleſh of certain animals they differed on, and did not eat.

---

[*] Geneſis, chap. xlvii. ver. 4.

The Egyptians worſhipped the cow †, and the ſhepherds lived upon her fleſh, which made them a ſeparate people, that could not eat nor communicate together; and the very knowledge of this was, as we are informed by ſcripture, the reaſon why Joſeph told Pharaoh, when he aſked him what profeſſion his brethren were of, "Your ſervants, ſays Joſeph, are ſhepherds, and their employment the feeding of cattle;" and this was given out, that the land of Goſhen might be allotted to them, and ſo they and their deſcendents be kept ſeparate from the Egyptians, and not expoſed to mingle in their abominations. Or, though they had abſtained from theſe abominations, they could not kill cattle for ſacrifice or for food. They would have raiſed ill-will againſt themſelves, and, as Moſes ſays, would have been ſtoned, and ſo the end of bringing them to Goſhen would have been fruſtrated, which was to nurſe them in a plentiful land, in peace and ſecurity, till they ſhould attain to be a mighty people, capable of ſubduing and filling the land to which, at the end of their captivity, God was to lead them.

---

* Exod. chap. viii. ver. 26.

† Herod. lib. ii. p. 104. ſec. 40.

The Abyſſinians neither eat nor drink with ſtrangers, though they have no reaſon for this; and it is now a mere prejudice, becauſe the old occaſion for this regulation is loſt. They break, or purify, however, every veſſel a ſtranger of any kind ſhall have ate or drank in. The cuſtom then is copied from the Egyptians, and they have preſerved it, tho' the Egyptian reaſon does no longer hold.

Some hiſtorians ſay, the Egyptian women anciently enjoyed a full liberty of intercourſe with the males, which was not the caſe in the generality of eaſtern nations; and we muſt, therefore, think it was derived from Abyſſinia; for there the women live, as it were, in common, and their enjoyments and gratification have no other bounds but their own will. They, however, pretend to have a principle, that, if they marry, they ſhould be wives of one huſband; and yet this principle does not bind, but, like moſt of the other duties, ſerves to reaſon upon, and to laugh at, in converſation. Herodotus tells it was the ſame with the Egyptians*.

The Egyptians made no account of the mother what her ſtate was; if the father was free, the child followed the condition of the father. This is ſtrictly ſo in Abyſſinia. The king's child by a negro-ſlave, bought with money, or taken in war, is as near in ſucceeding to the crown, as any one of twenty children that he has older than that one, and born of the nobleſt women of the country.

---

* Herodot. p. 121. ſect. 92.

The men in Egypt* did neither buy nor ſell; the ſame is the caſe in Abyſſinia at this day. It is infamy for a man to go to market to buy any thing. He cannot carry water or bake bread; but he muſt waſh the cloaths belonging to both ſexes, and, in this function, the women cannot help him. In Abyſſinia the men carried their burdens on their heads, the women on their ſhoulders, and this difference, we are told, obtained in Egypt†. It is plain, that this buying, in the public market, by women, muſt have ended whenever jealouſy or ſequeſtration of that ſex began; for this reaſon it ended early in Egypt, but, for the oppoſite reaſon, it ſubſiſts in Abyſſinia to this day.

It was a ſort of impiety in Egypt to eat a calf; and the reaſon was plain, they worſhipped the cow. In Abyſſinia, to this day, no man eats veal, although every one very willingly eats a cow. The Egyptian‡ reaſon no longer ſubſiſts as in the former caſe, but the prejudice remains, though they have forgot the reaſon.

The Abyſſinians eat no wild or water-fowl, not even the gooſe, which was a great delicacy in Egypt. The reaſon of this is, that, upon their converſion to Judaiſm, they were forced to relinquiſh their ancient municipal cuſtoms, as far as they were contrary to the Moſaical law; and the animals, in their country, not correſponding in form, kind, nor name, with thoſe mentioned in the Septuagint, or original Hebrew, it

---

[*] Herodot. lib. ii. p. 101. ſect. 35.

[†] Herodot. lib. ii. p. 101. ſect. 35.

[‡] Herodot. lib. ii. p. 104. ſect. 41.

it has followed, that there are many of each claſs that know not whether they are clean or not; and a wonderful confuſion and uncertainty has followed through ignorance or miſtake, being unwilling to violate the law in any one inſtance through not underſtanding it.

The abhorrence of the old Egyptians for the bean is well known, and many ſilly reaſons have been aſſigned for it; but that which has moſt met the approbation of the moſt learned men is, in my humble opinion, the weakeſt of them all. They ſay, the averſion to the bean aroſe from its reſembling the phallus; but the crux anſata, or the croſs with the handle to it, which is put in the hand of every Egyptian hieroglyphic of Iſis, Oſiris, or whatever the prieſts have called them, is likewiſe agreed by the learned to repreſent the phallus; and the figure of theſe nudities, without vail or concealment, is plain in all their ſtatues. Now, I would aſk, What is the reaſon why they abhor a bean becauſe it repreſents theſe parts which, at the ſame time, by their own option or choice, are expoſed in the hand or perſon of every figure which they exhibit to public view? The bean, however, is not cultivated in Abyſſinia, neither is it in Egypt; lupines grow up in both, and lupines in both are eradicated like a weed, and lupines were what is called *faba Ægyptiaca.*

Though I cannot pretend to know the true reaſon of this, yet I will venture to give a gueſs:—The origin of great part of religious obſervances of Egypt began with the worſhip of the Nile, and probably at the head of it. The country of the Agows, as well where the Nile riſes as in parts more diſtant, is all a honey country; not only their whole ſuſtenance, but their trade, their tribute to the king, and the maintenance of a great part of the capital, depends upon honey and butter, the common food of the better ſort of people when they do not eat fleſh; it compoſes their drink alſo in mead or hydromel. Now, this country, when uncultivated, naturally produces lupines, and the bloſſoms of theſe becoming food for the bees, gives the honey ſuch a bitterneſs that no perſon will eat it, or uſe it any way in food or for drink.—After the king had beſtowed the village of Geeſh upon me, though with the conſent of Faſil its governor, that egregious ſhuffler, to make the preſent of no uſe to me, ſent me, indeed, the tribute of the honey in very large jars, but it all taſted ſo much of the lupines that it was of no earthly uſe whatever. Their conſtant attention is to weed out this bitter plant; and, when any of thoſe countries are deſolated by war, we may expect a large crop of lupines immediately to follow, and, for a time, plenty of bad honey in conſequence. It is, then, this deſtructive bean that Pythagoras, who, it is ſaid, ate no fleſh, regarded as an object of deteſtation; it was equally ſo among the Abyſſinians and Egyptians for the ſame reaſon. Both nations, moreover, have an averſion to hogs fleſh, and both avoid the touch of dogs.

It is here I propoſe to take notice of an unnatural cuſtom which prevails univerſally in Abyſſinia, and which in early ages ſeems to have been common to the whole world. I did not think that any perſon of moderate knowledge in profane learning could have been ignorant of this remarkable cuſtom among the nations of the eaſt. But what ſtill more ſurpriſed me, and is the leaſt pardonable part of the whole, was the ignorance of part of the law of God, the earlieſt that was given to man, the moſt frequently noted, inſiſted upon, and prohibited. I have ſaid, in the courſe of the narrative of my journey from Maſuah, that, a ſmall diſtance from Axum, I overtook on the way three travellers, who ſeemed to be ſoldiers, driving a cow before them. They halted at a brook, threw down the beaſt, and one of them cut a pretty large collop of fleſh from its buttocks, after which they drove the cow gently on as before. A violent outcry was raiſed in England at hearing this circumſtance, which they did not heſitate to pronounce *impoſſible*, when the manners and cuſtoms of Abyſſinia were to them utterly unknown. The Jeſuits, eſtabliſhed in Abyſſinia for above a hundred years, had told them of that people eating, what they call raw meat, in every page, and yet they were ignorant of this. Poncet, too, had done the ſame, but Poncet they had not read; and if any writer upon Ethiopia had omitted to mention it, it was becauſe it was one of thoſe facts too notorious to be repeated to ſwell a volume.

It muſt be from prejudice alone we condemn the eating of raw fleſh; no precept, divine or human, that I know, forbids it; and if it is true, as later travellers have diſcovered, that there are nations ignorant of the uſe of fire, any law againſt eating raw fleſh could never have been intended by God as obligatory upon mankind in general. At any rate, it is certainly not clearly known, whether the eating raw fleſh was not an earlier and more general practice than by preparing it with fire; I think it was.

Many wiſe and learned men have doubted whether it was at firſt permitted to man to eat animal food at all. I do not pretend to give any opinion upon the ſubject, but many topics have been maintained ſucceſsfully upon much more ſlender grounds. God, the author of life, and the beſt judge of what was proper to maintain it, gave this regimen to our firſt parents—"Behold, I have given you every herb "bearing ſeed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding ſeed: to "you it ſhall be for meat *." And though, immediately after, he mentions both beaſts and fowls, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth, he does not ſay that he has deſigned any of theſe as meat for man. On the contrary, he ſeems to have intended the vegetable creation as food for both man and beaſt—"And to every beaſt of the earth "and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that "creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is life*, I have given "every green herb for meat: and it was ſo †." After the flood, when mankind began to repoſſeſs the earth, God gave Noah a much more extenſive permiſſion—"Every moving "thing that liveth ſhall be meat for you; even as the green "herb have I given you all things ‡."

As the criterion of judging of their aptitude for food was declared to be their *moving* and having *life*, a danger appeared of miſinterpretation, and that theſe creatures ſhould be uſed living; a thing which God by no means intended, and therefore, immediately after, it is ſaid, "But fleſh with "the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, ſhall you not "eat §;" or, as it is rendered by the beſt interpreters, 'Fleſh, or members, torn from living animals having the blood in them, thou ſhalt not eat.' We ſee then, by this prohibition, that

---

* Gen. chap. i. ver. 29. † Gen. chap. i. ver. 30. ‡ Gen. chap. ix. ver. 3. § Gen. chap. ix. v. 4.

this abuſe of eating living meat, or part of animals while yet alive, was known in the days of Noah, and forbidden after being ſo known, and it is preciſely what is practiſed in Abyſſinia to this day. This law, then, was prior to that of Moſes, but it came from the ſame legiſlator. It was given to Noah, and conſequently obligatory upon the whole world. Moſes, however, inſiſts upon it throughout his whole law; which not only ſhews that this abuſe was common, but that it was deeply rooted in, and interwoven with, the manners of the Hebrews. He poſitively prohibits it four times in one chapter in Deuteronomy *, and thrice in one of the chapters of Leviticus †—“ Thou ſhalt not eat the blood, for the blood “ is the life; thou ſhalt pour it upon the earth like water.”

Although the many inſtances of God's tenderneſs to the brute creation, that conſtantly occur in the Moſaical precepts, and are a very beautiful part of them, and tho' the barbarity of the cuſtom itſelf might reaſonably lead us to think that humanity alone was a ſufficient motive for the prohibition of eating animals alive, yet nothing can be more certain, than that greater conſequences were annexed to the indulging in this crime than what was apprehended from a mere depravity of manners. One ‡ of the moſt learned and ſenſible men that ever wrote upon the ſacred ſcriptures obſerves, that God, in forbidding this practice, uſes more ſevere certification, and more threatening language, than againſt any other ſin, excepting idolatry, with which it is conſtantly joined. God declares, “ I will ſet my face “ againſt him that eateth blood, in the ſame manner as I “ will againſt him that ſacrificeth his ſon to Moloch; I will “ ſet

---

* Deut. chap. xii. † Levit. chap. xvii. ‡ Maimon. more. Nebochim.

"ſet my face againſt him that eateth fleſh with blood, till I "cut him off from the people."

We have an inſtance in the life of Saul * that ſhews the propenſity of the Iſraelites to this crime. Saul's army, after a battle, *flew*, that is, fell voraciouſly upon the cattle they had taken, and threw them upon the ground to cut off their fleſh, and eat them raw, ſo that the army was defiled by eating blood, or living animals. To prevent this, Saul cauſed roll to him a great ſtone, and ordered thoſe that killed their oxen to cut their throats upon that ſtone. This was the only lawful way of killing animals for food; the tying of the ox and throwing it upon the ground was not permitted as equivalent. The Iſraelites did probably in that caſe as the Abyſſinians do at this day; they cut a part of its throat, ſo that blood might be ſeen upon the ground, but nothing mortal to the animal followed from that wound. But, after laying his head upon a large ſtone, and cutting his throat, the blood fell from on high, or was poured on the ground like water, and ſufficient evidence appeared the creature was dead before it was attempted to eat it. We have ſeen that the Abyſſinians came from Paleſtine a very few years after this; and we are not to doubt that they then carried with them this, with many other Jewiſh cuſtoms, which they have continued to this day.

The author I laſt quoted ſays, that it is plain, from all the books of the eaſtern nations, that their motive for eating fleſh with the life, or limbs of living animals cut off with the

---

* 1 Sam. chap. xiv. ver. 32. 33.

the blood, was from motives of religion, and for the purpoſes of idolatry, and ſo it probably had been among the Jews; for one of the reaſons given in Leviticus for the prohibition of eating blood, or living fleſh, is, that the people may no longer offer ſacrifices to devils, after whom they have gone a-whoring[*]. If the reader chooſes to be further informed how very common this practice was, he need only read the Halacoth Gedaloth, or its tranſlation, where the whole chapter is taken up with inſtances of this kind.

THAT this practice likewiſe prevailed in Europe, as well as in Aſia and Africa, may be collected from various authors. The Greeks had their bloody feaſts and ſacrifices where they ate living fleſh; theſe were called Omophagia. Arnobius[†] ſays, "Let us paſs over the horrid ſcenes preſented at the Baccahanlian feaſt, wherein, with a counterfeited fury, though with a truly depraved heart, you twine a number of ſerpents around you, and, pretending to be poſſeſſed with ſome god, or ſpirit, you tear to pieces, with bloody mouths, the bowels of living goats, which cry all the time from the torture they ſuffer." From all this it appears, that the practice of the Abyſſinians eating live animals at this day, was very far from being new, or, what was nonſenſically ſaid, *impoſſible.* And I ſhall only further obſerve, that thoſe of my readers that wiſh to indulge a ſpirit of criticiſm upon the great variety of cuſtoms, men and manners, related in this hiſtory, or have thoſe criticiſms attended to, ſhould furniſh themſelves with a more decent ſtock of reading than, in this inſtance, they ſeem to have poſſeſſed; or, when another example occurs of that kind, which they call *impoſſible*, that they would take the truth of it upon my word, and believe what they are not ſufficiently qualified to inveſtigate.

---

[*] Levit. chap. xvii. ver. 7.

[†] Arnob. adv. Gent. Clem. Alexan. Sextus Impiricus, lib. iii. cap. 25. and Selden. de Jur. natur. and Gent. cap. 1. lib. vii.

Consistent with the plan of this work, which is to deſcribe the manners of the ſeveral nations through which I paſſed, good and bad, as I obſerved them, I cannot avoid giving ſome account of this Polyphemus banquet, as far as decency will permit me; it is part of the hiſtory of a barbarous people; whatever I might wiſh, I cannot decline it.

In the capital, where one is ſafe from ſurpriſe at all times, or in the country or villages, when the rains have become ſo conſtant that the valleys will not bear a horſe to paſs them, or that men cannot venture far from home through fear of being ſurrounded and ſwept away by temporary torrents, occaſioned by ſudden ſhowers on the mountains; in a word, when a man can ſay he is ſafe at home, and the ſpear and ſhield is hung up in the hall, a number of people of the beſt faſhion in the villages, of both ſexes, courtiers in the palace, or citizens in the town, meet together to dine between twelve and one o'clock.

A long table is ſet in the middle of a large room, and benches beſide it for a number of gueſts who are invited. Tables and benches the Portugueze introduced amongſt them; but bull hides, ſpread upon the ground, ſerved them before, as they do in the camp and country now. A cow or bull, one or more, as the company is numerous, is brought cloſe to the door, and his feet ſtrongly tied. The ſkin that hangs down under his chin and throat, which I think we call the dew-lap in England, is cut only ſo deep as to arrive at the fat, of which it totally conſiſts, and, by the ſeparation of a few ſmall blood-veſſels, ſix or ſeven drops of blood only fall upon the ground. They have no ſtone, bench, nor altar upon which theſe cruel aſſaſſins lay the animal's head in this operation. I ſhould beg his pardon indeed for calling him an aſſaſſin, as he is not ſo merciful as to aim at the life, but, on the contrary, to keep the beaſt alive till he be totally eat up. Having ſatisfied the Moſaical law, according to his conception, by pouring theſe ſix or ſeven drops upon the ground, two or more of them fall to work; on the back of the beaſt, and on each ſide of the ſpine they cut ſkin-deep; then putting their fingers between the fleſh and the ſkin, they begin to ſtrip the hide of the animal half way down his ribs, and ſo on to the buttock, cutting the ſkin wherever it hinders them commodiouſly to ſtrip the poor animal bare. All the fleſh on the buttocks is cut off then, and in ſolid, ſquare pieces, without bones, or much effuſion of blood; and the prodigious noiſe the animal makes is a ſignal for the company to ſit down to table.

There are then laid before every gueſt, inſtead of plates, round cakes, if I may ſo call them, about twice as big as a a pan-cake, and ſomething thicker and tougher. It is unleavened bread of a ſouriſh taſte, far from being diſagreeable, and very eaſily digeſted, made of a grain called teff. It is of different colours, from black to the colour of the whiteſt wheat-bread. Three or four of theſe cakes are generally put uppermoſt, for the food of the perſon oppoſite to whoſe ſeat they are placed. Beneath theſe are four or five of ordinary bread, and of a blackiſh kind. Theſe ſerve the maſter to wipe his fingers upon; and afterwards the ſervant, for bread to his dinner.

Two or three ſervants then come, each with a ſquare piece of beef in their bare hands, laying it upon the cakes of teff, placed like diſhes down the table, without cloth or any thing elſe beneath them. By this time all the gueſts have knives in their hands, and their men have the large crooked ones, which they put to all ſorts of uſes during the time of war. The women have ſmall claſped knives, ſuch as the worſt of the kind made at Birmingham, ſold for a penny each.

The company are ſo ranged that one man ſits between two women; the man with his long knife cuts a thin piece, which would be thought a good beef-ſteak in England, while you ſee the motion of the fibres yet perfectly diſtinct, and alive in the fleſh. No man in Abyſſinia, of any faſhion whatever, feeds himſelf, or touches his own meat. The women take the ſteak and cut it length-ways like ſtrings, about the thickneſs of your little finger, then croſsways into ſquare pieces, ſomething ſmaller than dice. This they lay upon a piece of the teff bread, ſtrongly powdered with black pepper, or Cayenne pepper, and foſſile-ſalt, they then wrap it up in the teff bread like a cartridge.

In the mean time, the man having put up his knife, with each hand reſting upon his neighbour's knee, his body ſtooping, his head low and forward, and mouth open very like an idiot, turns to the one whoſe cartridge is firſt ready, who ſtuffs the whole of it into his mouth, which is ſo full that he is in conſtant danger of being choked. This is a mark of grandeur. The greater the man would ſeem to be, the larger piece he takes in his mouth; and the more noiſe he makes in chewing it, the more polite he is thought to be. They have, indeed, a proverb that ſays, "Beggars "and thieves only eat ſmall pieces, or without making a "noiſe." Having diſpatched this morſel, which he does very expeditiouſly, his next female neighbour holds forth another cartridge, which goes the ſame way, and ſo on till he is ſatisfied. He never drinks till he has finiſhed eating; and, before he begins, in gratitude to the fair ones that fed him, he makes up two ſmall rolls of the ſame kind and form; each of his neighbours open their mouths at the ſame time, while with each hand he puts their portion into their mouths. He then falls to drinking out of a large handſome horn; the ladies eat till they are ſatisfied, and then all drink together, "Vive la Joye et la Jeuneſſe!" A great deal of mirth and joke goes round, very ſeldom with any mixture of acrimony or ill-humour.

All this time, the unfortunate victim at the door is bleeding indeed, but bleeding little. As long as they can cut off the fleſh from his bones, they do not meddle with the thighs, or the parts where the great arteries are. At laſt they fall upon the thighs likewiſe; and ſoon after the animal, bleeding to death, becomes ſo tough that the canibals, who have the reſt of it to eat, find very hard work to ſeparate the fleſh from the bones with their teeth like dogs.

In the mean time, thoſe within are very much elevated; love lights all its fires, and every thing is permitted with abſolute freedom. There is no coyneſs, no delays, no need of appointments or retirement to gratify their wiſhes;

there are no rooms but one, in which they ſacrifice both to Bacchus and to Venus[*]. The two men neareſt the vacuum a pair have made on the bench by leaving their ſeats, hold their upper garment like a ſkreen before the two that have left the bench; and, if we may judge by ſound, they ſeem to think it as great a ſhame to make love in ſilence as to eat.—Replaced in their ſeats again, the company drink the happy couple's health; and their example is followed at different ends of the table, as each couple is diſpoſed. All this paſſes without remark or ſcandal, not a licentious word is uttered, nor the moſt diſtant joke upon the tranſaction.

These ladies are, for the moſt part, women of family and character, and they and their gallants are reciprocally diſtinguiſhed by the name *Woodage*, which anſwers to what in Italy they call Ciciſbey; and, indeed, I believe that the name itſelf, as well as the practice, is Hebrew; *ſchus chis beiim*, ſignifies *attendants* or *companions of the bride*, or *bride's man*, as we call it in England. The only difference is, that in Europe the intimacy and attendance continues during the marriage, while, among the Jews, it was permitted only the few days of the marriage ceremony. The averſion to Judaiſm, in the ladies of Europe, has probably led them to the *prolongation* of the term.

It was a cuſtom of the ancient Egyptians to purge themſelves monthly for three days; and the ſame is ſtill in practice in Abyſſinia. We ſhall ſpeak more of the reaſon of this

---

[*] In this particular they reſemble the Cynics of old, of whom it was ſaid, "Omnia quæ ad "Bacchum et Venerem pertinuerint in publico facere." Diogenes Laertius in Vit. Diogen.

practice in the botanical part of our work, where a drawing of a moſt beautiful tree *, uſed for this purpoſe, is given.

ALTHOUGH we read from the Jeſuits a great deal about marriage and polygamy, yet there is nothing which may be averred more truly than that there is no ſuch thing as marriage in Abyſſinia, unleſs that which is contracted by mutual conſent, without other form, ſubſiſting only till diſſolved by diſſent of one or other, and to be renewed or repeated as often as it is agreeable to both parties, who, when they pleaſe, cohabit together again as man and wife, after having been divorced, had children by others, or whether they have been married, or had children with others or not. I remember to have once been at Koſcam in preſence of the Iteghè, when, in the circle, there was a woman of great quality, and ſeven men who had all been her huſbands, none of whom was the happy ſpouſe at that time.

UPON ſeparation they divide the children. The eldeſt ſon falls to the mother's firſt choice, and the eldeſt daughter to the father. If there is but one daughter, and all the reſt ſons, ſhe is aſſigned to the father. If there is but one ſon, and all the reſt daughters, he is the right of the mother. If the numbers are unequal after the firſt election, the reſt are divided by lot. There is no ſuch diſtinction as legitimate and illegitimate children from the king to the beggar; for ſuppoſing any one of their marriages valid, all the iſſue of the reſt muſt be adulterous baſtards.

ONE

---

* Vide appendix, article Cuſſo.

One day Ras Michael aſked me, before Abba Salama, (the Acab Saat) Whether ſuch things as theſe promiſcuous marriages and divorces were permitted and practiſed in my country? I excuſed myſelf till I was no longer able; and, upon his inſiſting, I was obliged to anſwer, That even if ſcripture had not forbid to us as Chriſtians, as Engliſhmen the law reſtrained us from ſuch practices, by declaring polygamy felony, or puniſhable by death.

The king in his marriage uſes no other ceremony than this:—He ſends an Azage to the houſe where the lady lives, where the officer announces to her, It is the king's pleaſure that ſhe ſhould remove inſtantly to the palace. She then dreſſes herſelf in the beſt manner, and immediately obeys. Thenceforward he aſſigns her an apartment in the palace, and gives her a houſe elſewhere in any part ſhe chuſes. Then when he makes her Iteghé, it ſeems to be the neareſt reſemblance to marriage; for, whether in the court or the camp, he orders one of the judges to pronounce in his preſence, That he, the king, has choſen his hand-maid, naming her for his queen; upon which the crown is put upon her head, but ſhe is not anointed.

The crown being hereditary in one family, but elective in the perſon, and polygamy being permitted, muſt have multiplied theſe heirs very much, and produced conſtant diſputes, ſo that it was found neceſſary to provide a remedy for the anarchy and effuſion of royal blood, which was otherwiſe inevitably to follow. The remedy was a humane and gentle one, they were confined in a good climate upon a high mountain, and maintained there at the public expence. They are there taught to read and write, but nothing

thing elſe; 750 cloths for wrapping round them, 3000 ounces of gold, which is 30,000 dollars, or crowns, are allowed by the ſtate for their maintenance. Theſe princes are hardly uſed, and, in troubleſome times, often put to death upon the ſmalleſt miſinformation. While I was in Abyſſinia their revenue was ſo groſsly miſapplied, that ſome of them were ſaid to have died with hunger and of cold by the avarice and hard-heartedneſs of Michael neglecting to furniſh them neceſſaries. Nor had the king, as far as ever I could diſcern, that fellow-feeling one would have expected from a prince reſcued from that very ſituation himſelf; perhaps this was owing to his fear of Ras Michael.

However that be, and however diſtreſſing the ſituation of thoſe princes, we cannot but be ſatisfied with it when we look to the neighbouring kingdom of Sennaar, or Nubia. There no mountain is truſted with the confinement of their princes, but, as ſoon as the father dies, the throats of all the collaterals, and all their deſcendents that can be laid hold of, are cut; and this is the caſe with all the black ſtates in the deſert weſt of Sennaar, Dar Fowr, Selé, and Bagirma.

Great exaggerations have been uſed in ſpeaking of the military force of this kingdom. The largeſt army that ever was in the field (as far as I could be informed from the oldeſt officers) was that in the rebellion before the battle of Serbraxos. I believe, when they firſt encamped upon the lake Tzana, the rebel army altogether might amount to about 50,000 men. In about a fortnight afterwards, many had deſerted; and I do not think (I only ſpeak by hearſay) that, when the king marched out of Gondar, they were then above 30,000. I believe when Gojam joined, and it was known that Michael and his army were to be made priſoners, that the rebel army increaſed to above 60,000 men; cowards and brave, old and young, veteran ſoldiers and blackguards, all came to be ſpectators of that deſirable event, which many of the wiſeſt had deſpaired of living to ſee. I believe the king's army never amounted to 26,000 men; and, by deſertion and other cauſes, when we retreated to Gondar, I do not ſuppoſe the army was 16,000, moſtly from the province of Tigré. Faſil, indeed, had not joined; and putting his army of 12,000 men, (I make no account of the wild Galla beyond the Nile) I do not imagine that any king of Abyſſinia ever commanded 40,000 effective men at any time, or upon any cauſe whatever, excluſive of his houſehold troops.

Their ſtandards are large ſtaves, ſurmounted at the top with a hollow ball; below this is a tube in which the ſtaff is fixed; and immediately below the ball, a narrow ſtripe of ſilk made forked, or ſwallow-tailed, like a vane, and ſeldom much broader. In the war of Begemder we firſt ſaw colours like a flag hoiſted for king Theodorus. They were red, about eight feet long and near three feet broad; but they never appeared but two days; and the ſucceſs that attended their firſt appearance was ſuch that did not bid fair to bring them into faſhion.

The ſtandards of the infantry have their flags painted two colours croſsways—yellow, white, red, or green. The horſe have all a lion upon their flag[*], ſome a red, ſome a green, and ſome a white lion. The black horſe have a yellow lion, and over it a white ſtar upon a red flag, alluding to two prophecies, the one, "Judah is a young lion," and the other, "There ſhall come a ſtar out of Judah." This had been diſcontinued for want of cloth till the war of Begemder, when a large piece was found in Joas's wardrobe, and was thought a certain omen of his victory, and of a long and vigorous reign. This piece of cloth was ſaid to have been brought from Cairo by Yaſous II. for the campaign of Sennaar, and, with the other ſtandards and colours, was ſurrendered to the rebels when the king was made priſoner.

---

[*] The firſt invention is attributed to the Portugueſe.

The king's houſehold troops ſhould conſiſt of about 8000 infantry, 2000 of which carry firelocks, and ſupply the place of archers; bows have been laid aſide for near a hundred years, and are only now uſed by the Waito Shangalla, and ſome other barbarous inconſiderable nations.

These troops are divided into four companies, each under an officer called Shalaka, which anſwers to our colonel. Every twenty men have an officer, every fifty a ſecond, and every hundred a third; that is, every twenty have one officer who commands them, but is commanded likewiſe by an officer who commands the fifty; ſo that there are three officers who command fifty men, ſix command a hundred, and thirty command five hundred, over whom is the Shalaka; and this body they call Bet, which ſignifies a *houſe*, or *apartment*, becauſe each of them goes by the name of one of the king's apartments. For example, there is an apartment called Anbaſa Bet, or the *lion's houſe*, and a regiment carrying that name has the charge of it, and their duty is at that apartment, or that part of the palace where it is; there is another called Jan Bet, or the *elephant's houſe*, that gives the name to another regiment; another called Werk Sacala, or the *gold houſe*, which gives its name to another corps; and ſo on with the reſt; as for the horſe, I have ſpoken of them already.

There are four regiments, that ſeldom, if ever, amounted to 1600 men, which depend alone upon the king, and are all foreigners, at leaſt the officers; theſe have the charge of his perſon while in the field. In times when the king is out of leading-ſtrings, they amount to four or five thouſand, and then oppreſs the country, for they have great privileges. At times when the king's hands are weak, they are kept incomplete out of fear and jealouſy, which was the caſe in my time;—theſe have been already ſufficiently deſcribed.

Three proclamations are made before the king marches. The firſt is, "Buy your mules, get ready your proviſion, and pay your ſervants, for, after ſuch a day, they that ſeek me here ſhall not find me." The ſecond is about a week after, or according as the exigency is preſſing; this is, "Cut down the kantuffa in the four quarters of the world, for I do not know where I am going." This kantuffa is a terrible thorn which very much moleſts the king and nobility in their march, by taking hold of their long hair, and the cotton cloth they are wrapped in. The third and laſt proclamation is, "I am encamped upon the Angrab, or Kahha; "he that does not join me there, I will chaſtiſe him for "ſeven years." I was long in doubt what this term of ſeven years meant, till I recollected the jubilee-year of the Jews, with whom ſeven years was a preſcription of offences, debts, and all treſpaſſes.

The rains generally ceaſe the eighth of September; a ſickly ſeaſon follows till they begin again about the 20th of October; they then continue pretty conſtant, but moderate in quantity, till Hedar St Michael, the eighth of November. All epidemic diſeaſes ceaſe with the end of theſe rains, and it is then the armies begin to march.

CHAP. XII.

State of Religion—Circumciſion, Exciſion, &c.

THERE is no country in the world where there are ſo many churches as in Abyſſinia. Though the country is very mountainous, and conſequently the view much obſtructed, it is very ſeldom you ſee leſs than five or ſix churches, and, if you are on a commanding ground, five times that number. Every great man that dies thinks he has atoned for all his wickedneſs if he leaves a fund to build a church, or has built one in his lifetime. The king builds many. Wherever a victory is gained, there a church is erected in the very field ſtinking with the putrid bodies of the ſlain. Formerly this was only the caſe when the enemy was Pagan or Infidel; now the ſame is obſerved when the victories are over Chriſtians.

THE ſituation of a church is always choſen near running water, for the convenience of their purifications and ablutions, in which they obſerve ſtrictly the Levitical law. They are always placed upon the top of ſome beautiful, round hill, which is ſurrounded entirely with rows of the oxycedrus, or Virginia cedar, which grows here in great beauty and perfection, and is called Arz *. There is nothing adds ſo much to the beauty of the country as theſe churches and the plantations about them.

In the middle of this plantation of cedars is interſperſed, at proper diſtances, a number of thoſe beautiful trees called Cuſſo, which grow very high, and are all extremely picturesque.

All the churches are round, with thatched roofs; their ſummits are perfect cones; the outſide is ſurrounded by a number of wooden pillars, which are nothing elſe than the trunks of the cedar-tree, and are placed to ſupport the edifice, about eight feet of the roof projecting beyond the wall of the church, which forms an agreeable walk, or colonade, around it in hot weather, or in rain. The inſide of the church is in ſeveral diviſions, according as is preſcribed by the law of Moſes. The firſt is a circle ſomewhat wider than the inner one; here the congregation ſit and pray. Within this is a ſquare, and that ſquare is divided by a veil or curtain, in which is another very ſmall diviſion anſwering to the holy of holies. This is ſo narrow that none but the prieſts can go into it. You are bare-footed whenever you enter the church, and, if bare-footed, you may go through every part of

---

* Ludolf, in his dictionary, ſays, this word, in Hebrew, ſignifies any tall tree. In this, however, he is miſtaken. The tranſlators did not, indeed, know what tree it was, and ſo have ſaid this to cover their ignorance; but Arz is as excluſively the oxy-cedrus, as is an oak or an elm when ſo named. Arz is indeed a tall tree, but every tall tree is not Arz, which is the Virginia berry-bearing cedar.

of it, if you have any ſuch curioſity, provided you are pure, *i. e.* have not been concerned with women for twenty-four hours before, or touched carrion or dead bodies, (a curious aſſemblage of ideas) for in that caſe you are not to go within the precincts, or outer circumference of the church, but ſtand and ſay your prayers at an awful diſtance among the cedars.

All perſons of both ſexes, under Jewiſh diſqualifications, are obliged to obſerve this diſtance; and this is always a place belonging to the church, where, unleſs in Lent, you ſee the greateſt part of the congregation; but this is left to your own conſcience, and, if there was either great inconvenience in the one ſituation, or great ſatisfaction in the other, the caſe would be otherwiſe.

When you go to the church you put off your ſhoes before your firſt entering the outer precinct; but you muſt leave a ſervant there with them, or elſe they will be ſtolen, if good for any thing, by the prieſts and monks before you come out of the church. At entry you kiſs the threſhold, and two door-poſts, go in and ſay what prayer you pleaſe, that finiſhed, you come out again, and your duty is over. The churches are full of pictures, painted on parchment, and nailed upon the walls, in a manner little leſs ſlovenly than you ſee paltry prints in beggarly country ale-houſes. There has been always a ſort of painting known among the ſcribes, a daubing much inferior to the worſt of our ſign-painters. Sometimes, for a particular church, they get a number of pictures of ſaints, on ſkins of parchment, ready finiſhed from Cairo, in a ſtile very little ſuperior to theſe performances of their own. They are placed like a frize, and hung in the upper part of the wall. St George is generally there with his dragon, and St Demetrius fighting a lion. There is no choice in their ſaints, they are both of the Old and New Teſtament, and thoſe that might be diſpenſed with from both. There is St Pontius Pilate and his wife; there is St Balaam and his aſs; Samſon and his jaw-bone; and ſo of the reſt. But the thing that ſurpriſed me moſt was a kind of ſquare-miniature upon the front of the head-piece, or mitre, of the prieſt, adminiſtring the ſacrament at Adowa, repreſenting Pharaoh on a white horſe plunging in the Red Sea, with many guns and piſtols ſwimming upon the ſurface of it around him.

Nothing emboſſed, nor in relief, ever appears in any of their churches; all this would be reckoned idolatry, ſo much ſo that they do not wear a croſs, as has been repreſented, on the top of the ball of the ſendick, or ſtandard, becauſe it caſts a ſhade; but there is no doubt that pictures have been uſed in their churches from the very earlieſt age of Chriſtianity.

The Abuna is looked upon as the patriarch of the Abyſſinian church, for they have little knowledge of the coptic patriarch of Alexandria. We are perfectly ignorant of the hiſtory of theſe prelates for many years after their appointment. The firſt of theſe mentioned is Abuna Tecla Haimanout, who diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the reſtoration of the royal family, and the regulations he made both in church and ſtate, as we have ſeen in the hiſtory of thoſe times: a very remarkable, but wiſe regulation was then made, that the Abyſſinians ſhould not have it in their power to chooſe one of their own countrymen as Abuna.

Wise men ſaw the fallen ſtate of literature among them; and unleſs opportunity was given, from time to time, for their prieſts to go abroad to Jeruſalem for their inſtruction, and for the purpoſe of bringing the Abuna, Tecla Haimanout knew that very ſoon no ſet of people would be more ſhamefully ignorant than thoſe prieſts, even in the moſt common dogmas of their profeſſion. He hoped therefore, by a conſiderable ſtipend, to tempt ſome men of learning to accept of this place, to give his countenance to learning and religion among them.

The Arabic canon*, which is preſerved by the Abyſſinian church, and ſaid to be of the council of Nice, ſhould certainly be attributed to this Abuna, and is a forgery in, or very ſoon after, his time; for it is plain this canon took place about the year 1300, that it was lawful to elect an Abuna, who was a native of Abyſſinia before this prohibition, otherwiſe it would not have applied. Abuna Tecla Haimanout was an Abyſſinian by birth, and he was Abuna; the prohibition therefore had not then taken place: but, as no Abyſſinian was afterwards choſen, it muſt certainly be a work of his time, for it is impoſſible a canon ſhould be made by the council of Nice, ſettling the rank of a biſhop in a nation which, for above 200 years after that general council, were not Chriſtians.

As the Abuna very ſeldom underſtands the language, he has no ſhare of the government, but goes to the palace on days of ceremony, or when he has any favour to aſk or complaint to make. He is much fallen in eſteem from what he was formerly, chiefly from his own little intrigues, his ignorance, avarice, and want of firmneſs. His greateſt employment is in ordinations. A number of men and children preſent themſelves at a diſtance, and there ſtand, from humility, not daring to approach him. He then aſks who theſe are? and they tell him that they want to be deacons. On this, with a ſmall iron croſs in his hand, after making two or three ſigns, he blows with his mouth twice or thrice upon them, ſaying, "Let them be deacons." I ſaw once all the army of Begemder made deacons, juſt returned from ſhedding the blood of 10,000 men, thus drawn up in Aylo Meidan, and the Abuna ſtanding at the church of St Raphael, about a quarter of a mile diſtant from them. With theſe were mingled about 1000 women, who conſequently, having part of the ſame blaſt and brandiſhment of the croſs, were as good deacons as the reſt.

---

* See Ludolf, lib. iii. cap. 2. N°. 17.

The ſame with regard to monks. A crowd of people, when he is riding, will aſſemble within 500 yards of him, and there begin a melancholy ſong. He aſks who theſe men with beards are? they tell him they want to be ordained monks. After the ſame ſigns of the croſs, and three blaſts with his mouth, he orders them to be monks. But in ordaining prieſts, they muſt be able to read a chapter of St Mark, which they do in a language he does not underſtand a word of. They then give the Abuna a brick of ſalt, to the value of perhaps ſixpence, for their ordination; which, from this preſent given, the Jeſuits maintained to be Simoniacal.

The Itchegué is the chief of the monks in general, eſpecially thoſe of Debra Libanos. The head of the other monks, called thoſe of St Euſtathius, is the ſuperior of the convent of Mahebar Selaſſé, on the N. W. corner of Abyſſinia, near Kuara, and the Shangalla, towards Sennaar and the river Dender. All this tribe is groſsly ignorant, and through time, I believe, will loſe the uſe of letters entirely.

The Itchegué is ordained by two chief prieſts holding a white cloth, or veil, over him, while another ſays a prayer; and they then lay all their hands on his head, and join in pſalms together. He is a man, in troubleſome times, of much greater conſequence than the Abuna. There are, after theſe, chief prieſts and ſcribes, as in the Jewiſh church: the laſt of theſe, the ignorant, careleſs copiers of the holy ſcriptures.

The monks here do not live in convents, as in Europe, but in ſeparate houſes round their church, and each cultivates a part of the property they have in land. The prieſts have their maintenance aſſigned to them in kind, and do not labour. A ſteward, being a layman, is placed among them by the king, who receives all the rents belonging to the churches, and gives to the prieſts the portion that is their due; but neither the Abuna, nor any other churchman, has any buſineſs with the revenues of churches, nor can touch them.

The articles of the faith of the Abyſſinians have been inquired into and diſcuſſed with ſo much keenneſs in the beginning of this century, that I fear I ſhould diſoblige ſome of my readers were I to paſs this ſubject without notice.

Their firſt biſhop, Frumentius, being ordained about the year 333, and inſtructed in the religion of the Greeks of the church of Alexandria by St Athanaſius, then ſitting in the chair of St Mark, it follows that the true religion of the Abyſſinians, which they received on their converſion to Chriſtianity, is that of the Greek church; and every rite or ceremony in the Abyſſinian church may be found and traced up to its origin in the Greek church while both of them were orthodox.

Frumentius preſerved Abyſſinia untainted with hereſy till the day of his death. We find, from a letter preſerved in the works of St Athanaſius ,that Conſtantius, the heretical Greek emperor, wiſhed St Athanaſius to deliver him up, which that patriarch refuſed to do: indeed at that time it was not in his power.

Soon after this, Arianiſm, and a number of other hereſies, each in their turn, were brought by the monks from Egypt, and infected the church of Abyſſinia. A great part of theſe hereſies, in the beginning, were certainly owing to the difference of the languages in thoſe times, and eſpecially the two words Nature and Perſon, than which no two words were ever more equivocal in every language in which they have been tranſlated. Either of theſe words, in our own language, is a ſufficient example of what I have ſaid; and in fact we have adopted them from the Latin. If we had adopted the ſignification of theſe words in religion from the Greek, and applied the Latin words of Perſon and Nature to common and material caſes, perhaps we had done better. Neither of them hath ever yet been tranſlated into the Abyſſinian, ſo as to be underſtood to mean the ſame thing in different places. This for a time was, in a certain degree, remedied, or underſtood, by the free acceſs they had, for ſeveral ages, both to Cairo and Jeruſalem, where their books were reviſed and corrected, and many of the principal orthodox opinions inculcated. But, ſince the conqueſt of Arabia and Egypt by Sultan Selim, in 1516, the communication between Abyſſinia and theſe two countries hath been very precarious and dangerous, if not entirely cut off; and now as to doctrine, I am perfectly convinced they are in every reſpect to the full as great heretics as ever the Jeſuits repreſented them. And I am confident, if any Catholic miſſionaries attempt to inſtruct them again, they will ſoon loſe the uſe of letters, and the little knowledge they yet have of religion, from prejudice only, and fear of incurring a danger they are not ſufficiently acquainted with to follow the means of avoiding it.

The two natures in Chriſt, the two perſons, their unity, their equality, the inferiority of the manhood, doctrines, and definitions of the time of St Athanaſius, are all wrapt up in tenfold darkneſs, and inextricable from amidſt the thick clouds of hereſy and ignorance of language. Nature is often miſtaken for perſon, and perſon for nature; the ſame of the human ſubſtance. It is monſtrous to hear their reaſoning upon it. One would think, that every different monk, every time he talks, purpoſely broached ſome new hereſy. Scarce one of them that ever I converſed with, and thoſe of the very beſt of them, would ſuffer it to be ſaid, that Chriſt's body was perfectly like our's. Nay, it was eaſily ſeen that, in their hearts, they went ſtill further, and were very loth to believe, if they did believe it at all, that the body of the Virgin Mary and St Anne were perfectly human.

Not to trouble the reader further with theſe unintereſting particulars and diſtinctions, I ſhall only add, that the Jeſuits, in the account they give of the hereſies, ignorance, and obſtinacy of the Abyſſinian clergy, have not miſrepreſented them, in the imputations made againſt them, either in point of faith or of morals. Whether, this being the caſe, the miſſion they undertook of themſelves into that country, gave them authority to deſtroy the many with a view to convert the few, is a queſtion to be reſolved hereafter; I believe it did not; and that the tares and the wheat ſhould have been ſuffered to grow together till a hand of more authority, guided by unerring judgment, pulled them, with that portion of ſafety he had pre-ordained for both.

The Proteſtant writers again unfairly triumph over their adverſaries the Catholics, by aſking, Why all that noiſe about the two natures in Chriſt? It is plain, ſay they, from paſſages in the Haimanout Abou, and their other tracts upon orthodox belief, that they acknowledge that Chriſt was perfect God and perfect man, of a rational ſoul and human fleſh ſubſiſting, and that all the confeſſions of unity, coequality, and inferiority, are there expreſſed in the cleareſt manner as received in the Greek church. What neceſſity was there for more; and what need of diſputing upon theſe points already ſo fully ſettled?

This, I beg leave to ſay, is unfair; for though it is true that, at the time of collecting the Haimanout Abou, and at the time St Athanaſius, St Cyril, and St Chryſoſtom wrote, the explanation of theſe points was uniform in favour of orthodoxy, and that while acceſs could eaſily be had to Jeruſalem or Alexandria, then Greek and Chriſtian cities, difficulties, if any aroſe, were eaſily reſolved; yet, at the time the Jeſuits came, thoſe books were very rare in the country, and the contents of them ſo far from being underſtood, that they were applied to the ſupport of the groſſeſt hereſies, from the miſinterpretation of the ignorant monks of theſe latter times. That the Abyſſinians *had been* orthodox availed nothing: they *were then* become as ignorant of the doctrines of St Athanaſius and St Cyril, as if thoſe fathers had never wrote; and it is their religion at this period which the Jeſuits condemn, not that of the church of Alexandria, when in its purity under the firſt patriarchs; and, to complete all their misfortunes, no acceſs to Jeruſalem is any longer open to them, and very rarely communication with Cairo.

On the other hand, the Jeſuits, who found that the Abyſſinians were often wrong in ſome things, were reſolved to deny that they could be right in any thing; and, from attacking their tenets, they fell upon their ceremonies received in the Greek church at the ſame time with Chriſtianity; and in this diſpute they ſhewed great ignorance and malevolence, which they ſupported by the help of falſehood and invention. I ſhall take notice of only one inſtance in many, becauſe it has been inſiſted upon by both parties with unuſual vehemence, and very little candour.

It was ſettled by the firſt general council, that one baptiſm only was neceſſary for the regeneration of man, for freeing him from the ſin of our firſt parents, and liſting

him

him under the banner of Chriſt,—“ I confeſs one baptiſm for the remiſſion of ſins,” ſays the Symbol. Now it was maintained by the Jeſuits, that in Abyſſinia, once every year, they baptiſed all grown people, or adults. I ſhall, as briefly as poſſible, ſet down what I myſelf ſaw while on the ſpot.

The ſmall river, running between the town of Adowa and the church, had been dammed up for ſeveral days; the ſtream was ſcanty, ſo that it ſcarcely overflowed. It was in places three feet deep, in ſome, perhaps, four, or little more. Three large tents were pitched the morning before the feaſt of the Epiphany; one on the north for the prieſts to repoſe in during intervals of the ſervice, and beſide this one to communicate in: on the ſouth there was a third tent for the monks and prieſts of another church to reſt themſelves in their turn. About twelve o'clock at night the monks and prieſts met together, and began their prayers and pſalms at the water-ſide, one party relieving each other. At dawn of day the governor, Welleta Michael, came thither with ſome ſoldiers to raiſe men for Ras Michael, then on his march againſt Waragna Faſil, and ſat down on a ſmall hill by the water-ſide, the troops all ſkirmiſhing on foot and on horſeback around them.

As ſoon as the ſun began to appear, three large croſſes of wood were carried by three prieſts dreſſed in their ſacerdotal veſtments, and who, coming to the ſide of the river, dipt the croſs into the water, and all this time the firing, ſkirmiſhing, and praying went on together. The prieſts with the croſſes returned, one of their number before them carrying ſomething leſs than an Engliſh quart of water in a ſilver cup or chalice; when they were about fifty yards from Welleta Michael, that general ſtood up, and the prieſt took as much water as he could hold in his hands and ſprinkled it upon his head, holding the cup at the ſame time to Welleta Michael's mouth to taſte; after which the prieſt received it back again, ſaying, at the ſame time, "Gzier y'barak," which is ſimply, "May God bleſs you." Each of the three croſſes were then brought forward to Welleta Michael, and he kiſſed them. The ceremony of ſprinkling the water was then repeated to all the great men in the tent, all cleanly dreſſed as in gala. Some of them, not contented with aſperſion, received the water in the palms of their hands joined, and drank it there; more water was brought for thoſe that had not partaken of the firſt; and, after the whole of the governor's company was ſprinkled, the croſſes returned to the river, their bearers ſinging *hallelujahs*, and the ſkirmiſhing and firing continuing.

Janni, my Greek friend, had recommended me to the prieſt of Adowa; and, as the governor had placed me by him, I had an opportunity, for both theſe reaſons, of being ſerved among the firſt. My friend the prieſt ſprinkled water upon my head, and gave me his bleſſing in the ſame words he had uſed to the others; but, as I ſaw it was not neceſſary to drink, I declined putting the cup to my lips, for two reaſons; one, becauſe I knew the Abyſſinians have a ſcruple to eat or drink after ſtrangers; the other, becauſe I apprehended the water was not perfectly clean; for no ſooner had the croſſes firſt touched the pool, and the cup filled from the clean part for the governor, than two or three hundred boys, calling themſelves *deacons*, plunged in with only a white cloth, or rag, tied round their middle; in all other reſpects they were perfectly naked. All their friends and relations (indeed everybody) went cloſe down to the edge of the pool, where water was thrown upon them, and firſt decently enough by boys of the town, and thoſe brought on purpoſe as deacons; but, after the better ſort of people had received the aſperſion, the whole was turned into a riot, the boys, muddying the water, threw it round them upon every one they ſaw well-dreſſed or clean. The governor retreated firſt, then the monks, and then the croſſes, and left the brook in poſſeſſion of the boys and blackguards, who rioted there till two o'clock in the afternoon.

I MUST, however, obſerve, that, a very little time after the governor had been ſprinkled, two horſes and two mules, belonging to Ras Michael and Ozoro Eſther, came and were waſhed. Afterwards the ſoldiers went in and bathed their horſes and guns; thoſe who had wounds bathed them alſo. I ſaw no women in the bath uncovered, even to the knee; nor did I ſee any perſon of the rank of decent ſervants go into the water at all except with the horſes. Heaps of platters and pots, that had been uſed by Mahometans or Jews, were brought thither likewiſe to be purified; and thus the whole ended.

I SAW this ceremony performed afterwards at Kahha, near Gondar, in preſence of the king, who drank ſome of the water, and was ſprinkled by the prieſts; then took the cup in his hand, and threw the reſt that was left upon Amha Yaſous *, ſaying, "I will be your deacon;" and this was thought a high compliment, the prieſt giving him his bleſſing at the ſame time, but offering him no more water.

I SHALL

---

* Prince of Shoa, often ſpoken of in the ſequel.

I SHALL now ſtate, in his own words, the account given of this by Alvarez, chaplain to the Portugueſe embaſſy under Don Roderigo de Lima.

THE king had invited Don Roderigo de Lima, the Portugueſe ambaſſador, to be preſent at the celebration of the feſtival of the Epiphany. They went about a mile and a half from their former ſtation, and encamped upon the ſide of a pond which had been prepared for the occaſion. Alvarez ſays, that, in their way, they were often aſked by thoſe they met or overtook, "Whether or not they were going to be baptized?" to which the chaplain and his company anſwered in the negative, as having been already once baptized in their childhood.

"IN the night, ſays he, a great number of prieſts aſſembled about the pond, roaring and ſinging with a view of bleſſing the water. After midnight the baptiſm began. The Abuna Mark, the king and queen, were the firſt that went into the lake; they had each a piece of cotton cloth about their middle, which was juſt ſo much more than the reſt of the people had. At the ſun-riſing the baptiſm was moſt thronged; after which, when Alvarez* *came*, the lake was full of holy water, into which they had poured oil."

IT ſhould ſeem, from this outſet of his narrative, that he was not at the lake till the ceremony was half over, and did not ſee the benediction of the water at all, nor the curious exhibition

---

[*] Vide Alvarez's narrative in his account of the embaſſy of Don Roderigo de Lima, page 155.

exhibition of the King, Queen, and Abuna, and their cotton cloths. As for the circumſtance of the oil being poured into the water, I will not poſitively contradict it, for, though I was early there, it might have eſcaped me if it was done in the dark. However, I never heard it mentioned as part of the ceremony; and it is probable I ſhould, if any ſuch thing was really practiſed; neither was I in time to have ſeen it at Kahha.

“ Before the pond a ſcaffold was built, covered round with planks, within which ſat the king looking towards the pond, his face covered with blue taffeta, while an old man, who was the king's tutor, was ſtanding in the water up to the ſhoulders, naked as he was born, and half dead with cold, for it had *frozen* violently in the night. All thoſe that came near him he took by the head and plunged them in the water, whether men or women, ſaying, in his own language, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.”

Now Shoa, where the king was then, is in lat. 8° N. and the ſun was in 22° ſouth declination, advancing northward, ſo the ſun was, on the day of the Epiphany, within 30° of the zenith of the bathing-place. The thermometer of Fahrenheit riſes at Gondar about that time to 68°, ſo in Shoa it cannot riſe to leſs than 70°, for Gondar is in lat. 12° N. that is 4° farther northward, ſo it is not poſſible water ſhould freeze, nor did I ever ſee ice in Abyſſinia, not even on the higheſt or coldeſt mountains. January is one of the hotteſt months in the year, day and night the ſky is perfectly ſerene, nor is there there a long diſproportioned winter night. At Shoa the days are equal to the nights, at leaſt as to ſenſe, even in the month of January.

The baptiſm, Alvarez ſays, began at midnight, and the old tutor dipt every perſon under water, taking him by the head, ſaying, 'I baptiſe thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.' It was moſt thronged at ſunriſe, and ended about nine o'clock; a long time for an old man to ſtand in frozen water.

The number (as women were promiſcuouſly admitted) could not be leſs than 40,000; ſo that even the nine hours this baptiſt-general officiated, he muſt have had exerciſe enough to keep him warm, if 40,000, (many of them naked beauties) paſſed through *his hands*.

The women were ſtark naked before the men, not even a rag about them. Without ſome ſuch proper medium as frozen water, I fear it would not have contributed much to the intereſts of religion to have truſted a prieſt (even an old one) among ſo many bold and naked beauties, eſpecially as he had the firſt ſix hours of them in the dark.

The Abuna, the king, and queen, were the three firſt baptiſed, all three being abſolutely naked, having only a cotton cloth round their middle. I am ſure there never could be a greater deviation from the manners of any kingdom, than this is from thoſe of Abyſſinia. The king is always covered; you ſeldom ſee any part of him but his eyes. The queen and every woman in Abyſſinia, in public and private, (I mean where nothing is intended but converſation) are covered to the chin. It is a diſgrace to them to have even their feet ſeen by ſtrangers; and their arms and hands are concealed even to their nails. A curious circumſtance therefore it would have been for the king to be ſo liberal of his queen's charms, while he covers his own face with blue taffeta; but to imagine that the Abuna, a coptiſh monk bred in the deſert of St Macarius, would expoſe himſelf naked among naked women, contrary to the uſual cuſtom of the celebration he obſerves in his own church, is monſtrous, and muſt exceed all belief whatever. As the Abuna Mark too was of the reaſonable age of 110 years, he might, I think, have diſpenſed at that time of life with a bathing gown, eſpecially as it was *froſt*.

The old man in the pond repeated the formula, "I baptiſe you in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt," in his own language; and Alvarez, it is plain, underſtood not one word of Abyſſinian. Yet, on the other hand, he ſpeaks Latin to the king, who wonderfully underſtands him, and anſwers as deciſively on the merits of the diſpute as if he had been educated in the Sorbonne. "Confiteor unum baptizma" ſays Alvarez *, was a conſtitution of the Nicene council under Pope Leo. Right, ſays the king, whoſe church, however, anathematized Leo and the council he preſided at, which both the king and Alvarez ſhould have known was not the Nicene council, though the words of the ſymbol quoted are thought to be part of a confeſſion framed by that aſſembly.

---

* Vid. Alvarez, hoc loco.

“Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit ſalvus erit,” ſays Alvarez. “You ſay right, anſwers the king, as to baptiſm; theſe are the words of our Saviour; but this preſent ceremony was lately invented by a grandfather of mine, in favour of ſuch as have turned Moors, and are deſirous again of becoming Chriſtians.”

I SHOULD think, in the firſt place, this anſwer of the king, ſhould have let Alvarez ſee no baptiſm was intended there; or, if it was a re-baptiſm, it only took place in favour of thoſe who had turned Moors, and muſt therefore have been but partial. If this was really the caſe, what had the king, queen, and Abuna to do in it? Sure they had neither apoſtatized nor was the company of apoſtates a very creditable ſociety for them.

ALVAREZ, to perſuade us this is real baptiſm, ſays that oil was thrown into the pond before he came. He will not charge himſelf with having ſeen this, and it is probably a falſehood. But he knew it was an eſſential in baptiſm in all the churches in the eaſt; ſo indeed is ſalt, which he ſhould have ſaid was here uſed likewiſe: then he would have had all the materials of Greek baptiſm, and this ſalt might have contributed to cooling the water, that had frozen under the rays of a burning ſun.

ALVAREZ muſt have ſeen, that not only men and women go to be waſhed in the pool, but horſes, cows, mules, and a prodigious number of aſſes. Are theſe baptiſed? I would wiſh to know the formula the reverend baptiſt-general uſed on their occaſion.

THERE is but one church where I ever ſaw ſacred rites, or ſomething like baptiſm, conferred upon aſſes; it is, I think, at Rome on St Andrew's or St Patrick's day. It ſhould be St Balaam's, if he was in the Roman kalendar as high as he is in the Abyſſinian. In that church (it is I think on Monte Cavallo) all ſorts of aſſes, about and within Rome, are gathered together, and ſhowers of holy water and bleſſings rained by a prieſt upon them. What is the formula I do not know; although it is a joke put upon ſtrangers, eſpecially of one nation, to aſſemble them there; or whether the two churches of Rome and Abyſſinia differ ſo much in this as in other points of diſcipline, I am not informed; but the rationality and decency of ſuch a ceremony being the ſame in all churches, the ſervice performed at the time ſhould be the ſame likewiſe.

I WILL not then have any ſcruple to ſay, that this whole account of Alvarez is a groſs fiction; that no baptiſm, or any thing like baptiſm, is meant by the ceremony; that a man is no more baptiſed by keeping the anniverſary of our Saviour's baptiſm, than he is crucified by keeping his crucifixion. The commemoration of our Saviour's baptiſm on the epiphany, and the bleſſing the waters that day, is an old obſervance of the eaſtern church, formerly performed in public in Egypt as now in Ethiopia. Since that of Alexandria fell into the hands of Mahometans, the fear of inſult and profanation has obliged them to confine this ceremony, and all other proceſſions, within the walls of their churches, in each of which there is conſtantly a place devoted to this uſe. Thoſe that cannot attend the ceremony of aſperſion in the church, eſpecially ſick or infirm people, have the water ſent to them, and a large contribution is made for the patriarch, or biſhop; yet nobody ever took it into their heads to tax either Greek or Armenian with a repetition of baptiſm.

Monsieur de Tournefort*, in his travels through the Levant, gives you a figure of the Greek prieſt, who bleſſes the water in a peculiar habit, with a paſtoral ſtaff in his hand.

But, beſides this, various falſehoods have likewiſe been propagated about the manner of baptiſm practiſed in Abyſſinia, all in order to impugn the validity of it, and to excuſe the raſh conduct of the Jeſuits for re-baptiſing all the Abyſſinians, as if they had been a Jewiſh and Pagan people that never had been baptiſed at all. The violation of this article of the creed, or confeſſion of Nice, was a cauſe of great offence to the Abyſſinians, and of the misfortunes that happened afterwards. The whole of the Abyſſinian ſervice of baptiſm is in their liturgy. The Jeſuits had plenty of copies in their hands, and could have pointed out the part of the ſervice that was heretical, if they had pleaſed; they did not pretend, however, to do this, and their ſilence condemns them.

As for the idle ſtories that are told of the words pronounced, ſuch as,—"I baptize you in the name of the Holy Trinity,"—"In the name of Peter and Paul,"—"I baptize you in the water of Jordan,"—"May God baptiſe you,"—"May God waſh you," and many others, they are all invented by the Jeſuits, to excuſe the repetition of baptiſm in Abyſſinia, which there was no ſort of occaſion for, as they might have examined the words and form in the liturgies, which are in every church; and I muſt here only obſerve, that if, as the chaplain of Alvarez ſays, the prieſt in the pool, on the feſtival of the Epiphany, was ſo fond of the proper words as even, at that time, to ſay, "I baptiſe you in the name of the Fa-"ther, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt," the words he quotes to ſhew this immerſion in water on the Epiphany, is a real baptiſm, I cannot comprehend why they ſhould vary them to other words, when nothing but baptiſm is meant. But this I can bear evidence of, that, in no time when I was preſent, as I have above a hundred times been at the baptiſm both of adults and infants, aye, and of apoſtates too, I never heard other words pronounced than the orthodox baptiſmal ones, "I baptize thee in the name of "the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt," immerging the child in pure water, into which they firſt pour a ſmall quantity of oil of olives, in the form of a croſs.

---

* Tournef. tom. i. p. 111.

The Abyſſinians receive the holy ſacrament in both kinds in unleavened bread, and in the grape bruiſed with the huſk together as it grows, ſo that it is a kind of marmalade, and is given in a flat ſpoon: whatever they may pretend, ſome mixture ſeems neceſſary to keep it from fermentation in the ſtate that it is in, unleſs the dried cluſter is freſh bruiſed juſt before it is uſed, for it is little more fluid than the common marmalade of confectioners; but it is perfectly the grape as it grew, bruiſed ſtones and ſkin together. Some means, however, have been uſed, as I ſuppoſe, to prevent fermentation, and make it keep; and, though this is conſtantly denied, I have often thought I taſted a flavour that was not natural to the grape itſelf.

It is a miſtake that there is no wine in Abyſſinia, for a quantity of excellent ſtrong wine is made at Dreeda, ſouth-weſt from Gondar about thirty miles, which would more than ſupply the quantity neceſſary for the celebration of the euchariſt in all Abyſſinia twenty times over. The people themſelves are not fond of wine, and plant the vine in one place only; and in this they have been imitated by the Egyptians, their colony; but a ſmall black grape, of an excellent flavour, grows plentifully wild in every wood in Tigré.

Large pieces of bread are given to the communicants in proportion to their quality; and I have ſeen great men, who, though they open their mouths as wide as conveniently a man can do, yet from the reſpect the prieſt bore him, ſuch a portion of the loaf was put into his mouth that water ran from his eyes, from the incapacity of chewing it, which, however, he does as indecently, and with full as much noiſe, as he eats at table.

After receiving the ſacrament of the euchariſt in both kinds, a pitcher of water is brought, of which the communicant drinks a large draught; and well he needs it to waſh down the quantity of bread he has juſt ſwallowed. He then retires from the ſteps of the inner diviſion upon which the adminiſtering prieſt ſtands, and, turning his face to the wall of the church, in private ſays ſome prayer with ſeeming decency and attention.

The Romaniſts doubt of the validity of the Abyſſinian conſecration of the elements, becauſe in their liturgy it is plainly ſaid, "Lord, put thy hand upon this cup, and bleſs "it, and ſanctify it, and purify it, that in it may be made "thy holy blood;" and of the bread they ſay, "Bleſs this "ſaucer, or plate, that in it may be made thy holy body." And in their prayer they ſay, "Change this bread that it "may be made thy pure body which is joined with this "cup of thy precious blood." The Jeſuits doubt of the validity of this conſecration, becauſe it is ſaid, "this *bread* is my body," and over the wine, "this *cup* is my blood;" whereas, to operate a true tranſubſtantiation, they ſhould ſay over the bread, "this is my body."

For my own part, I leave it to the reverend fathers, who are the beſt judges, what is neceſſary to operate this miracle of tranſubſtantiation. The reality of the thing itſelf is denied by all Proteſtant churches, has been often doubted by others, has been ridiculed by lay-writers, and can never be a matter, I believe, of thorough conviction, much leſs of proof to any. The dignity of the ſubject, on which it touches nearly, as well as tenderneſs for our brethren on the continent, an article of whoſe faith it is, ſhould always ſcreen it from being treated with pleaſantry, whatever we believe, or whether we believe it or not.

M. Ludolf thinks, that the words I have ſet down are a proof the Abyſſinians do not believe in tranſubſtantiation. For my part, from thoſe very words, I cannot think any thing is clearer than that they do; the bread is upon the plate; they pray that that plate may be bleſſed, "That in it the bread may be made God's holy body*;" and of the wine they ſay, "That it may be made thy holy blood:" and in their prayer they ſay, "Change this bread that it may be made thy body;" and again, "May the Holy Ghoſt ſhine upon this bread, that it may be made the body of Chriſt our God, and that this cup may be changed and become the blood, not the *ſymbol*, of the blood of Chriſt our God." With all reſpect to Mr Ludolf's opinion, I muſt think that, though the benediction prayed upon the patine, ſpoon, and chalice, is but an aukward expreſſion, yet, if I underſtand the language, "converte" and "immutetur" are literal tranſlations of the Ethiopic, and ſeem to pray for a tranſubſtantiation as directly as words will admit, whether they believe in it or not; nor, as far as I know, can any ſtronger or more expreſſive be found to ſubſtitute in their place.

---

* See the Ethiopic liturgies paſſim. Ludolf, lib. iii. cap. 5.

I SHALL finiſh this ſubject (which is not of my province, and which I have mentioned, becauſe I know it is a matter which ſome of my readers deſire information upon) by an anecdote that happened a few months before my coming into Abyſſinia, as it was accidentally told me by the prieſt of Adowa the very day of the Epiphany, and which Janni vouched to be true, and to have ſeen.

THE Sunday before Ras Michael's departure for Gondar from Adowa, he went to church in great pomp, and there received the ſacrament. There happened to be ſuch a crowd to ſee him, that the wine, part of the conſecrated elements, was thrown down and ſpilt upon the ſteps whereon the communicants ſtood at receiving. Some ſtraw or hay was inſtantly gathered and ſprinkled upon it to cover it, and the communicants continued the ſervice till the end, treading that graſs under foot.

This giving great offence to Janni, and ſome few prieſts that lived with him, it was told Michael, who, without explaining himſelf, ſaid only, "As to the fact of throwing the hay, they are a parcel of hogs, and know no better." Theſe few words had ſtuck in the ſtomach of the prieſt of Adowa, who, with great ſecrecy, and as a mark of friendſhip, begged I would give him my opinion what he ſhould have done, or rather, what would have been done in my country? I told him, "That the anſwer to his queſtion depended upon two things, which, being known, his difficulties would very eaſily be ſolved. If you do believe that the wine ſpilt by the mob upon the ſteps, and trod under foot afterwards, was really the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, then you was guilty of a moſt horrid crime, and you ſhould cry upon the mountains to cover you; and ages of atonement are not ſufficient to expiate it. You ſhould, in the mean time, have railed the place round with iron, or built it round with ſtone, that no foot, or any thing elſe but the dew of heaven, could have fallen upon it, or you ſhould have brought in the river upon the place that would have waſhed it all to the ſea, and covered it ever after from ſacrilegious profanation. But if, on the contrary, you believe, (as many Chriſtian churches do) that the wine (notwithſtanding conſecration) remained in the cup nothing more than wine, but was only the ſymbol, or type, of Chriſt's blood of the New Teſtament, then the ſpilling it upon the ſteps, and the treading upon it afterwards, having been merely accidental, and out of your power to prevent, being ſo far from your wiſh that you are heartily ſorry that it happened, I do not reckon that you are further liable in the crime of ſacrilege, than if the wine had not been conſecrated at all. You are to humble yourſelf, and ſincerely regret that ſo irreverent an accident happened in your hands, and in your time, but as you did not intend it, and could not prevent it; the conſequence of an accident, where inattention is exceedingly culpable, will be imputed to you, and nothing further."

THE prieſt declared to me, with great earneſtneſs, that he never did believe that the elements in the euchariſt were converted by conſecration into the real body and blood of Chriſt. He ſaid, however, that he believed this to be the Roman Catholic faith, but it never was his; and that he conceived the bread was bread, and the wine was wine, even after conſecration. From this example, which occurred merely accidentally, and was not the fruit of interrogation or curioſity, it appears to me, whatever the Jeſuits ſay, ſome at leaſt among the Abyſſinians do not believe the real preſence in the euchariſt; but further I am not enough informed to give a poſitive opinion. To follow this inveſtigation more curiouſly would have been attended with a conſiderable degree of danger; and therefore I have ſtated my only means of knowledge, and leave my readers entirely to the freedom of their own opinion, and to after inquiry and information.

THE Abyſſinians are not all agreed about the ſtate of ſouls before the reſurrection of the body. The opinion which generally prevails is, that there is no third ſtate; but that, after the example of the thief, the ſouls of good men enjoy the beatific viſion immediately upon the ſeparation from the body. But I muſt here obſerve, that their practice and books do both contradict this; for, as often as any perſon dies, alms are given, and prayers are offered for the ſouls of thoſe departed, which would be vain did they believe they were already in the preſence of God, and in poſſeſſion of the greateſt bleſs poſſible, wanting nothing to complete it. "Remember, (ſays their liturgy) O Lord! the ſouls of thy ſervants, our father Abba Matthias, and the reſt of our ſaints, Abba Salama, and Abba Jacob." In another place, "Remember, O Lord! the kings of Ethiopia, Abreha, and Atzbeha, Caleb, and Guebra Maſcal." And again, "Releaſe, O Lord! our father Antonius, and Abba Macarius.' If this is not directly acknowledging a ſeparate ſtate, it can have no meaning at all.

I HAVE already ſaid, that the Agaazi, the predeceſſors of thoſe people that ſettled in Tigrè from the mountains of the Habab, were ſhepherds adjoining to the Red Sea; that they ſpeak the language *Geez*, and are the only people in Abyſſinia in poſſeſſion of letters; that theſe are all circumciſed, both men and women. The former term, as applied to men, is commonly known to every one the leaſt acquainted with the Jewiſh hiſtory. The latter is, as far as I know, a rite merely Gentile, although in Africa, at leaſt that part adjoining to Egypt and the Red Sea, it is much more known and more univerſally practiſed than the other. This I ſhall call *exciſion*, that I may expreſs this uncommon operation by as decent a word as poſſible. The Falaſha likewiſe ſubmit to both.

THESE nations, however they agree in their rite, differ in their accounts of the time they received this ceremony, as well as the manner of performing it. The Abyſſinians of Tigré ſay, that they received it from Iſhmael's family and his deſcendants, with whom they were early connected in their trading voyages. They ſay alſo, that the queen of Saba, and all the women of that coaſt, had ſuffered exciſion at the uſual time of life, before puberty, and before her journey to Jeruſalem. The Falaſha again declare, that their circumciſion was that commonly practiſed at Jeruſalem in the time of Solomon, and in uſe among them when they left Paleſtine, and came into Abyſſinia.

The circumciſion of the Abyſſinians is performed with a ſharp knife, or razor. There is no laceration with the nails, no formula or repetition of words, nor any religious ceremony at the time of the operation, nor is it done at any particular age, and generally it is a woman that is the ſurgeon. The Falaſha ſay, they perform it ſometimes with the edge of a ſharp ſtone; ſometimes with a knife or razor, and at other times with the nails of their fingers; and for this purpoſe they have the nails of their little fingers of an immoderate length: at the time of the operation the prieſt chants a hymn, or verſe, importing, "Bleſſed art thou, O Lord, who haſt ordained circumciſion!" This is performed on the eighth day, and is a religious rite, according to the firſt inſtitution by God to Abraham.

The Abyſſinians pretend theirs is not ſo; and, being preſſed for the reaſon, they tell you it is becauſe Chriſt and the apoſtles were circumciſed, though they do not hold it neceſſary to ſalvation. But it is the objection they conſtantly make againſt eating out of the ſame plate, or drinking out of the ſame cup with ſtrangers, that they are uncircumciſed, while, with the Egyptians or the Cophts, though equally ſtrangers, they make no ſuch difficulty. In the time of the Jeſuits, when the Roman Catholic religion was aboliſhed, and liberty given them to return to their old worſhip, their prieſts proclaimed a general circumciſion; and the populace, in the firſt days of their fury, or triumph, murdered many Catholics, by ſtabbing them with a lance in that part, as they met them, repeating in deriſion the Jewiſh hymn, or ejaculation, "Bleſſed is the Lord that hath ordained circumciſion!" ſo that, I believe, their indifference in this article is rather owing to not being contradicted; juſt as they are careleſs about every other parts of religion, unleſs ſuch as have been revived in their minds by diſputes with the Jeſuits, and kept up ſince in part among their clergy. But none of them pretend that circumciſion ariſes from neceſſity of any kind, or from any obſtruction or impediment to procreation, or that it becomes neceſſary for cleanlineſs, or from the heat of climate.

None of theſe reaſons, conſtantly alledged in Europe, are ever to be heard of here, nor do I believe they have the ſmalleſt foundation any where; and this, I think, ſhould weigh ſtrongly in favour of the account ſcripture gives of it. Examining the origin of this ceremony, independent of this revelation, I will never believe that man, or nations of men, raſhly ſubmitted to a diſgraceful, ſometimes dangerous, and always painful operation, unleſs there had been propoſed, as a conſequence, ſome reward for ſubmitting to, or ſome puniſhment for refuſing it, which balanced in their minds the pain and danger, as well as diſgrace, of that operation.

All the inhabitants of the globe agree in conſidering it ſhameful to expoſe that part of their body, even to men; and in the eaſt, where, from climate, you are allowed, and from reſpect to your ſuperiors, the generality of men are forced to go naked, all agree in covering their waiſt, which is called their *nakedneſs*, though it is really the only part of their body that is covered. We ſee even that there was a curſe * attended the mere ſeeing that part of the body of a parent, and not inſtantly throwing a covering over it.

I do not propoſe diſcuſſing at large the arguments for or againſt the time of the beginning to circumciſe. The ſcripture has given ſuch an account of it, that, when weighed with the promiſe ſo exactly kept to the end, ſeems to me to be a very rational one. But, conſidering all revelation out of the queſtion, I think there is no room to inſtitute any free or fair inquiry. I give no pre-eminence to Moſes nor his writings. I ſuppoſe him a profane author; but, till thoſe that argue againſt his account, and maintain circumciſion was earlier than Abraham, ſhall ſhew me another profane writer as old as Moſes, as near the time they ſay it began as Moſes was to the time of Abraham, I will not argue with them in ſupport of Moſes againſt Herodotus, nor diſcuſs who Herodotus's Phenicians, and who his Egyptians were that circumciſed. Herodotus knew not Abraham nor Moſes, and, compared to their days, he is but as yeſterday. Thoſe Phenicians and Egyptians might, for any thing he knew at his time, have received circumciſion from Abraham or Iſhmael, or ſome of their poſterity, as the Abyſſinians or Ethiopians, whom he refers to, actually ſay they did, which Herodotus did not know, it is plain, though he mentions they were circumciſed. This tradition of the Abyſſinians merits ſome conſideration from what they ſay of it themſelves, that they were, in the earlieſt time, circumciſed before they left their native country, and ſettled in Tigrè. From this they derive no honour, nor do they pretend

---

* Gen. chap. ix. ver. 22.

tend to any. It would have been otherwiſe, if the æra fixed upon had been the reign of Menilek, ſon of Solomon, when they firſt embraced Judaiſm under a monarch. This would have made a much more brilliant epoch in their hiſtory, whilſt it was probable that they adopted circumciſion under the countenance of Azarias, the ſon of Zadok, the high prieſt, and the repreſentatives of the twelve tribes who came with him at that time from Jeruſalem.

It ſeems to me very extraordinary, that, if circumciſion was originally a Jewiſh invention, all thoſe nations to the ſouth ſhould be abſolutely ignorant of it, while others to the northward were ſo early acquainted with it; for none of thoſe nations up the Nile (excepting the Shepherds) either know or practiſe it to this day; though, ever ſince the 1400th year before Chriſt, they have been in the cloſeſt connection with the Jews. This would rather make me believe, that the rite of circumciſion went northward from the plain of Mamrè, for it certainly made no progreſs ſouthward from Egypt. We ſee it obtained in Arabia, by Zipporah[*], Moſes's wife, circumciſing her ſon upon their return to Egypt. Her great anxiety to have that operation immediately performed, ſhews that her's was a Judaical circumciſion; there was no ſin that attended the omiſſion of this operation in Egypt, but God had ſaid to Abraham[†], "The ſoul that is not circumciſed ſhall be cut off from Iſrael."

The Tcheratz Agows, who live between Laſta and Begemder, in an exceedingly fertile country, are not circumciſed;

---

[*] Exod. chap. iv. ver. 25.

[†] Gen. chap. xvii. ver. 14.

ciſed; and, therefore, if this nation left Paleſtine upon Joſhua paſſing Jordan, circumciſion was not known there, for the Agows to this day are uncircumciſed. The ſame may be ſaid of the Agows of Damot, who are ſettled at the head of the Nile. It will be ſeen by the two ſpecimens of their different languages that they are different nations, as I have alledged. Next to theſe are the Gafat, in a plain open country, who do not uſe circumciſion; none of them were ever converted to Judaiſm, and but few of them to Chriſtianity. The next are the people of Amhara who did not uſe circumciſion, at leaſt few of them, till after the maſſacre of the princes by Judith in the year 900, when the remaining princes of the line of Solomon fled to Shoa, and the court was eſtabliſhed there. The laſt of theſe nations that I ſhall mention are the Galla, who are not circumciſed; of this nation we have ſaid enough.

On the north, a black, woolly-headed nation, called the Shangalla, already often mentioned, bounds Abyſſinia, and ſerves like a ſtring to the bow made by theſe nations of Galla. Who they are we know perfectly, being the Cuſhite Troglodytes of Sofala, Saba, Axum and Meroë; ſhut up, as I have already mentioned, in thoſe caves, the firſt habitations of their more poliſhed anceſtors. Neither do theſe circumciſe, though they immediately bordered upon Egypt, while the Cuſhite, adjoining to the peninſula of Africa certainly did. As then ſo many nations contiguous to Egypt never received circumciſion from it, it ſeems an invincible argument, that this was no endemial rite or cuſtom among the Egyptians, and I have before obſerved, that it was of no uſe to this nation, as the reaſons mentioned by Philo, and the reſt, of cleanlineſs and climate, are abſolute dreams, and now, exploded; and that they are ſo is plain, becauſe, otherwiſe, the nations more to the ſouthward would have adopted it, as they have univerſally done another cuſtom, which I ſhall preſently ſpeak of.

Circumcision, then, having no natural cauſe or advantage, being in itſelf repugnant to man's nature, and extremely painful, if not dangerous, it could never originate in man's mind wantonly and out of free-will. It might have done ſo indeed from imitation, but with Abraham it had a cauſe, as God was to make his private family in a few years numerous, like the ſands of the ſea. This mark, which ſeparated them from all the world, was an eaſy way to ſhew whether the promiſe was fulfilled or not. They were going to take poſſeſſion of a land where circumciſion was not known, and this ſhewed them their enemy diſtinct from their own people. And it would be the groſſeſt abſurdity to ſend Samſon to bring, as tokens of the ſlain, ſo many foreſkins or prepuces of the Philiſtines, if, as Herodotus ſays, the Philiſtines had cut off their prepuces a thouſand years before.

I must here take notice that this cuſtom, filthy and barbarous as it is, has been adopted by the Abyſſinians of Tigrè, who have always been circumciſed, from a knowledge that the nations about them were not circumciſed at all. It is true they do not content themſelves with the foreſkin, and I doubt very much if this was not the caſe with the Jews likewiſe. On the contrary, in place of the foreſkin they cut the whole away, ſcrotum and all, and bring this to their ſuperiors, as a token they have killed an enemy.

Although it then appears that the nations which had Egypt between Abraham and them, that is, were to the ſouthward, did not follow the Egyptians in the rite of circumciſion, yet in another, of exciſion, they all concurred. Strabo* ſays, the Egyptians circumciſed both men and women, *like the Jews*. I will not pretend to ſay that any ſuch operation ever did obtain among the Jewiſh women, as ſcripture is ſilent upon it; and indeed it is nowhere ever pretended to have been a religious rite, but to be introduced from neceſſity, to avoid a deformity which nature has ſubjected particular people to, in particular climates and countries.

We perceive among the brutes, that nature, creating the animal with the ſame limbs or members all the world over, does yet indulge itſelf in a variety, in the proportion of ſuch limbs or members. Some are remarkable for the ſize of their heads, ſome for the breadth and bigneſs of the tail, ſome for the length of their legs, and ſome for the ſize of their horns. There is a diſtrict in Abyſſinia, within the perpetual rains, where cows, of no greater ſize than ours, have horns, each of which would contain as much water as the ordinary water-pail uſed in England does; and I remember on the frontiers of Sennaar, near the river Dender, to have ſeen a herd of many hundred cows, every one of which had the apparent conſtruction of their parts almoſt ſimilar with that of the bull; ſo that, for a conſiderable time, I was perſuaded that theſe were oxen, their udders being very ſmall, until I had ſeen them milked.

---

[*] Lib. xvii. p. 950.

This particular appearance, or unneceſſary appendage, at firſt made me believe that I had found the real cauſe of circumciſion from analogy, but, upon information, this did not hold. It is however otherwiſe in the exciſion of women. From climate, or ſome other cauſe, a certain diſproportion is found generally to prevail among them. And, as the population of a country has in every age been conſidered as an object worthy of attention, men have endeavoured to remedy this deformity by the amputation of that redundancy. All the Egyptians, therefore, the Arabians, and nations to the ſouth of Africa, the Abyſſinians, Gallas, Agows, Gafats, and Gongas, make their children undergo this operation, at no fixed time indeed, but always before they are marriageable.

When the Roman Catholic prieſts firſt ſettled in Egypt, they did not neglect ſupporting their miſſion by temporal advantages, and ſmall preſents given to needy people their proſelytes; but miſtaking this exciſion of the Coptiſh women for a ceremony performed upon Judaical principles, they forbade, upon pain of excommunication, that exciſion ſhould be performed upon the children of parents who had become Catholics. The converts obeyed, the children grew up, and arrived at puberty; but the conſequences of having obeyed the interdict were, that the man found, by chuſing a wife among Catholic Cophts, he ſubjected himſelf to a very diſagreeable inconveniency, to which he had conceived an unconquerable averſion, and therefore he married a heretical wife, free from this objection, and with her he relapſed into hereſy.

The miſſionaries therefore finding it impoſſible that ever their congregation could increaſe, and that this accident did fruſtrate all their labours, laid their caſe before the College of Cardinals *de propaganda fide*, at Rome. Theſe took it up as a matter of moment, which it really was, and ſent over viſitors ſkilled in ſurgery, fairly to report upon the caſe as it ſtood; and they, on their return, declared, that the heat of the climate, or ſome other natural cauſe, did, in that particular nation, invariably alter the formation ſo as to make a difference from what was ordinary in the ſex in other countries, and that this difference did occaſion a diſguſt, which muſt impede the conſequences for which matrimony was inſtituted. The college, upon this report, ordered that a declaration, being firſt made by the patient and her parents that it was not done from Judaical intention, but becauſe it diſappointed the ends of marriage, "Si modo "matrimonii fructus impediret id omnino tollendum eſ"ſet:" that the imperfection was, by all manner of means, to be removed; ſo that the Catholics, as well as the Cophts, in Egypt, undergo exciſion ever ſince. This is done with a knife, or razor, by women generally when the child is about eight years old *.

There is another ceremony with which I ſhall cloſe, and this regards the women alſo, and I ſhall call it *inciſion*. This is an uſage frequent, and ſtill retained among the Jews, though poſitively prohibited by the law: "Thou ſhalt not cut thy face for the ſake of, or on account of the dead *." As ſoon as a near relation dies in Abyſſinia, a brother or parent, couſin-german or lover, every woman in that relation, with the nail of her little finger, which ſhe leaves long on purpoſe, cuts the ſkin of both her temples, about the ſize of a ſixpence; and therefore you ſee either a wound or a ſcar in every fair face in Abyſſinia; and in the dry ſeaſon, when the camp is out, from the loſs of friends they ſeldom have liberty to heal till peace and the army return with the rains.

---

* The reader will obſerve, by the obſcurity of this paſſage, that it is with reluctance I have been determined to mention it at all; but as it is an hiſtorical fact, which has had material conſequences, I have thought it not allowable to omit it altogether. Any naturaliſt, wiſhing for more particular information, may conſult the French copy.

The Abyſſinians, like the ancient Egyptians, their firſt colony, in computing their time, have continued the uſe of the ſolar year. Diodorus Siculus ſays, "They do not reckon their time by the moon, but according to the ſun; that thirty days conſtitute their month, to which they add five days and the fourth part of a day, and this completes their year.

These five days were, by the Egyptians, called Nici, and, by the Greeks, Epagomeni, which ſignifies, days added, or ſuperinduced, to complete a ſum. The Abyſſinians add five days, which they call Quagomi, a corruption from the Greek Epagomeni, to the month of Auguſt, which is their Nahaaſſé. Every fourth year they add a ſixth day. They begin the year, like all the eaſtern nations, with the 29th or 30th day of Auguſt, that is the kalends of September, the 29th of Auguſt being the firſt of their month Maſcaram.

It

---

* Deut. chap. xiv. ver. 1.

It is uncertain whence they derived the names of their months; they have no ſignification in any of the languages of Abyſſinia. The name of the firſt month among the old Egyptians has continued to this day. It is Tot, probably ſo called from the firſt diviſion of time among the Egyptians, from obſervation of the helaical riſing of the dog-ſtar. The names of the months retained in Abyſſinia are poſſibly in antiquity prior to this; they are probably thoſe given them by the Cuſhite, before the Kalendars at Thebes and Meroë, their colony, were formed.

The common epoch which the Abyſſinians make uſe of is from the creation of the world; but in the quantity of this period they do not agree with the Greeks, nor with other eaſtern nations, who reckon 5508 years from the creation to the birth of Chriſt. The Abyſſinians adopt the even number of 5500 years, caſting away the odd eight years; but whether this was firſt done for eaſe of calculation, or ſome better reaſon, there is neither book nor tradition that now can teach us. They have, beſides this, many other epochs, ſuch as from the council of Nice and Epheſus. There is likewiſe to be met with in their books a portion of time, which is certainly a cycle; the Ethiopic word is kamar, which, literally interpreted, is an arch, or circle. It is not now in uſe in civil life among the Abyſſinians, and therefore was mentioned as containing various quantities from 100 years to 19; and there are places in their hiſtory where neither of theſe will apply, nor any even number whatever.

They make uſe of the golden number and epact conſtantly in all their eccleſiaſtic computations: the firſt they call Matqué, the other Abacté. Scaliger, who has taken great pains upon this confuſed ſubject, the computation of time in the church of Abyſſinia, without having ſucceeded in making it much clearer, tells us, that the firſt uſe or invention of epacts was not earlier than the time of Diocleſian; but this is contrary to the poſitive evidence of Abyſſinian hiſtory, which ſays expreſsly, that the epact was invented by Demetrius *, patriarch of Alexandria. "Unleſs, ſays the poet in their liturgy, Demetrius had made this revelation by the immediate influence of the Holy Ghoſt, how, I pray you, was it poſſible that the computation of time, called Epacts, could ever have been known?" And, again, "When you meet, ſays he, you ſhall learn the computation by epacts, which was taught by the Holy Ghoſt to father Demetrius, and by him revealed to you." Now Demetrius was the twelfth patriarch of Alexandria, who was elected about the 190th year of Chriſt, or in the reign of the emperor Severus, conſequently long before the time of Diocleſian.

It ſeems the reputation the Egyptians had from very old time for their ſkill in computation and the diviſion of time, remained with them late in the days of Chriſtianity. Pope Leo the Great, writing to the emperor Marcian, confeſſes that the fixing the time of the moveable feaſts was always an excluſive privilege of the church of Alexandria; and therefore, ſays he, in his letter about reforming the kalendar, the holy fathers endeavoured to take away the occaſion of this error, by delegating the whole care of this to the

---

* Encom. 12th October, Od. 3. tom. 1. Ann. Alexan. p. m. 363.

the biſhop of Alexandria, becauſe the Egyptians, from old times, ſeem to have had this gift of computation given them; and when theſe had ſignified to the apoſtolic See the days upon which the moveable feaſts were to happen, the church of Rome then notified this by writing to churches at a greater diſtance.

We are not to doubt that this privilege, which the church of Alexandria had been ſo long in poſſeſſion of, contributed much to inflame the minds of the Abyſſinians againſt the Roman Catholic prieſts, for altering the time of keeping Eaſter, by appointing days of their own; for we ſee violent commotions to have ariſen every year upon the celebration of this feſtival.

The Abyſſinians have another way of deſcribing time peculiar to themſelves; they read the whole of the four evangeliſts every year in their churches. They begin with Matthew, then proceed to Mark, Luke, and John, in order; and, when they ſpeak of an event, they write and ſay it happened in the days of Matthew, that is, in the firſt quarter of the year, while the goſpel of St Matthew was yet reading in the churches.

They compute the time of the day in a very arbitrary, irregular manner. The twilight, as I have before obſerved, is very ſhort, almoſt imperceptible, and was ſtill more ſo when the court was removed farther to the ſouthward in Shoa. As ſoon as the ſun falls below the horizon, night comes on, and all the ſtars appear. This term, then, the twilight, they chooſe for the beginning of their day, and call it Naggé, which is the very time the twilight of the morning laſts. The ſame is obſerved at night, and Meſet is meant to ſignify the inſtant of beginning the twilight, between the ſun's falling below the horizon and the ſtars appearing. Mid-day is by them called *Kater*, a very old word, which ſignifies *culmination*, or a thing's being arrived or placed at the middle or higheſt part of an arch. All the reſt of times, in converſation, they deſcribe by pointing at the place in the heavens where the ſun then was, when what they are deſcribing happened.

I SHALL conclude what further I have to ſay on this ſubject, by obſerving, that nothing can be more inaccurate than all Abyſſinian calculations. Beſides their abſolute ignorance in arithmetic, their exceſſive idleneſs and averſion to ſtudy, and a number of fanciful, whimſical combinations, by which every particular ſcribe or monk diſtinguiſhes himſelf, there are obvious reaſons why there ſhould be a variation between their chronology and ours. I have already obſerved, that the beginning of our years are different; ours begin on the 1ſt of January, and theirs on the 1ſt day of September, ſo that there are 8 months difference between us. The laſt day of Auguſt may be the year 1780 with us, and 1779 only with the Abyſſinians. And in the reign of their kings they very ſeldom mention either month or day beyond an even number of years. Suppoſing, then, it is known that the reign of ten kings extended from ſuch to ſuch a period, where all the months and days are comprehended, when we come to aſſign to each of theſe an equal number of years, without the correſpondent months and days, it is plain that, when all theſe ſeparate reigns come to be added together, the one ſum-total will not agree with the other, but will be more or leſs than the juſt time which that prince reigned. This, indeed, as errors compenſate full as frequently as they accumulate, will ſeldom amount to a difference above three years; a ſpace of time too trivial to be of any conſequence in the hiſtory of barbarous nations.

However, it will occur that even this agreement is no poſitive evidence of the exactneſs of the time, for it may ſo happen that the ſum-totals may agree, and yet every particular ſum conſtituting the whole may be falſe, that is, if the quantity of errors which are too much exactly correſpond with the quantity of errors that are too little; to obviate this as much as poſſible, I have conſidered three eclipſes of the ſun as recorded in the Abyſſinian annals. The firſt was in the reign of David III. the year before the king marched out to his firſt campaign againſt Maſſudi the Moor, in the unfortunate war with Adel. The year that the king marched into Dawaro was the 1526, after having diſpatched the Portugueſe ambaſſador Don Roderigo de Lima, who embarked at Maſuah on the 26th of April on board the fleet commanded by Don Hector de Silveyra, who had come from India on purpoſe to fetch him; and the Abyſſinian annals ſay, that, the year before the king marched, a remarkable eclipſe of the ſun had happened in the Ethiopic month Ter. Now, in conſulting our European accounts, we find that, on the ſecond of January, anſwering to the 18th day of Ter, there did happen an eclipſe of the ſun, which, as it was in the time of the year when the ſky is cloudleſs both night and day, muſt have been viſible all the time of its duration. So here our accounts do agree preciſely.

The ſecond happened on the 13th year of the reign of Claudius, as the Abyſſinian account ſtates it. Claudius ſucceeded to the crown in the 1540, and the 13th year of his reign will fall to be on the 1553. Now we find this eclipſe did happen in the ſame clear ſeaſon of the year, that is, on the 24th of January 1553, ſo in this ſecond inſtance our chronology is perfectly correct.

The third eclipſe of the ſun happened in the 7th year of the reign of Yaſous II. in Magabit, the ſeventh month of the Abyſſinians. Now Yaſous came to the crown in 1729, ſo that the 7th year of his reign will be in 1736, and on the 4th day of October, anſwering to the 8th day of the month Tekemt, N. S. in that year, we ſee this eclipſe obſerved in Europe.

As a further confirmation of this, we have ſtated the particulars of a comet which, the Abyſſinian annals ſay, appeared at Gondar in the month of November, in the 9th year of the reign of Yaſous I. and as this comet was obſerved in Europe to have come to its perihelion in December 1689, and as that year, according to our account, was really the 9th of that king's reign, no further proof of the exactneſs of our chronology can poſſibly be required. By means of theſe obſervations, counting backward to the time of Icon Amlac, and again forward to the death of Joas, which happened in 1768, and aſſigning to each prince the number of years that his own hiſtorians ſay he reigned, I have, in the moſt unexceptionable manner that I can deviſe, ſettled the chronology of this country; and the exact agreement it hath with all the remarkable events, regularly and ſufficiently vouched, plainly ſhews the accuracy of this method.

thod. If, therefore, in a few caſes, I differ two or three years from the Jeſuits in their firſt account of this country, I do not in any ſhape believe the fault to be mine, becauſe there are, at all theſe periods, errors in point of fact, both in Alvarez and Tellez, much more material and unaccountable than the miſtake of a few years; and theſe errors have been adopted with great confidence in the Hiſpania Illuſtrata, and ſome of the beſt books of Portugueſe hiſtory which have made mention of this country.

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

BOOK VI.

FIRST ATTEMPT TO DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF THE NILE FRUSTRATED—A SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY THITHER, WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF EVERY THING RELATING TO THAT CELEBRATED RIVER.

CHAP. I.

The Author made Governor of Ras el Feel.

I SOON received an inſtance of kindneſs from Ayto Confu which gave me great pleaſure on ſeveral accounts. On the ſouth part of Abyſſinia, on the frontiers of Sennaar, is a hot, unwholeſome, low ſtripe of country, inhabited entirely by Mahometans, divided into ſeveral ſmall diſtricts, known by the general name of Mazaga. Of this I have often before ſpoken, and ſhall have further occaſion in the ſequel.

The Arabs of Sennaar that are on bad terms with the governor of Atbara, fly hither acroſs the deſert to avoid the rapine and violence of that cruel tyrant. The arrival of theſe produces in an inſtant the greateſt plenty at Ras el Feel; markets are held everywhere; cattle of all kinds, milk, butter, elephants teeth, hides, and ſeveral other commodities, are ſold to a great amount.

The Arabs are of many different tribes; the chief are the Daveina, then the Nile. Theſe, beſides getting a good market, and food for their cattle and protection for themſelves, have this great additional advantage, they eſcape the Fly, and conſequently are not pillaged, as the reſt of the Arabs in Atbara are, when changing abodes to avoid the havock made by that inſect. In return for this, they conſtantly bring horſes from Atbara, below Sennaar, for the king's own uſe, and for ſuch of his cavalry who are armed with coats of mail, no Abyſſinian horſe, or very few at leaſt, being capable of that burden.

Ayto Confu had many diſtricts of land from his father Kaſmati Netcho, as well as ſome belonging to his mother Ozoro Eſther, which lay upon that frontier; it was called Ras el Feel, and had a ſendick and nagareet, but, as it was governed always by a deputy who was a Mahometan, it had no rank among the great governments of the ſtate. Beſides theſe lands, the patrimony of Confu, Ras Michael had given him more, and with them this government, young as he was, from favour to his mother Ozoro Eſther.

This Mahometan deputy was named Abdel Jelleel, a great coward, who had refuſed to bring out his men, tho' ſummoned, to join the king when marching againſt Faſil. He had alſo quarrelled with the Daveina, and robbed them, ſo that they traded no more with Ras el Feel, brought no more horſes, and the diſtrict was conſequently nearly ruined, whilſt a great outcry was raiſed againſt Abdel Jelleel by the merchants who uſed to trade at that market, not having now money enough to pay the *meery*.

Ammonios, his Billetana Gueta, was the perſon Ayto Confu had deſtined to go to Ras el Feel to reduce it to order, and diſplace Abdel Jelleel; but Ras Michael had put him as a man of truſt over the black horſe under me, ſo he was employed otherwiſe. Confu himſelf was now preparing to go thither to ſettle another deputy in the place of Abdel Jelleel, and he had aſked the aſſiſtance of troops from the king, by which this came to my knowledge.

The firſt time I ſaw Ozoro Eſther, I told her, that, unleſs ſhe had a mind to have her ſon die ſpeedily, ſhe ſhould, by every means in her power, diſſuade him from his journey to Ras el Feel, being a place where the bloody flux never ceaſed to rage; and this complaint had never perfectly left him ſince he had had the ſmall-pox, but had wore him to a ſhadow. There could be no ſurer way therefore of deſtroying him than letting him go thither as he propoſed. He had been for ſome time indeed taking bark, which had done him great ſervice. His mother Ozoro Eſther, the Iteghè, whoſe firſt favourite he was, and all his friends, now took the alarm, upon which the Ras forbade him poſitively to go.

NEGADE RAS MAHOMET, of whom we have already ſpoken, brother to Hagi Saleh, who had procured me my firſt lodging at Gondar, was head of all the Mahometans in that capital, nay, I may ſay, in Abyſſinia. He, too, was a favourite of the Ras, and ſhewed the ſame attachment to me, on account of Metical Aga, as had his brother Saleh. This man came to me one morning, and told me, that Yaſine, whom I had brought with me to Abyſſinia, and was recommended to me by Metical Aga, had married Abdel Jelleel's daughter, and that a ſon of Saleh had married a daughter of Yaſine's. He ſaid there was not a man in Abyſſinia that was a braver ſoldier and better horſeman than Yaſine; that he had no love for money, but was a man of probity and honour, as indeed I had always found him; that the people of Ras el Feel, to a man, wiſhed to have him for their governor in the room of Abdel Jelleel; and that all the Arabs, as well as Shekh Fidele, governor of Atbara, for Sennaar, wiſhed the ſame.

MAHOMET did not dare to ſpeak for fear of Ozoro Eſther, who was thought to favour Abdel Jelleel, but he promiſed, that, if Ayto Confu would appoint him inſtead of Abdel Jelleel, he would give him 50 ounces of gold, beſides what Yaſine ſhould allow upon his ſettlement, and would manage the affair with Michael when he had leave ſo to do. He added, that his brother Saleh ſhould furniſh Yaſine with 200 men from the Mahometans at Gondar, completely armed with their firelocks, and commanded by young Saleh in perſon.

I WAS not at this time any judge of the expediency of the meaſure; but one reſolution I had made, and determined to keep, that I never would accept a poſt or employment for myſelf, or ſolicit any ſuch for others. My reader will ſee, that, for my own ſafety, moſt unwillingly I had been obliged to break the firſt of theſe reſolutions almoſt as ſoon as it was formed, and I was now deliberating whether it was not better that I ſhould break the other for the ſame reaſon. Two things weighed with me extremely, the experience of Yaſine's prudence and attachment to me during the whole journey, and my determination to return by Sennaar, and never truſt myſelf more in the hands of that bloody aſſaſſin the Naybe of Maſuah, who I underſtood had, at ſeveral times, manifeſted his bad intentions towards me when I ſhould return by that iſland.

I FLATTERED myſelf, that great advantage would accrue to me by Yaſine's friendſhip with the Arabs and the Shekh of Atbara; and, having conſulted Ayto Aylo firſt, I made him propoſe it to Ozoro Eſther. I found, upon ſpeaking to that princeſs, that there was ſomething embroiled in the affair. She did not anſwer directly, as uſual, and I apprehended that the objection was to Yaſine. I was no longer in doubt of this, when Ozoro Eſther told me Abba Salama had ſtrongly eſpouſed the cauſe of Abdel Jelleel, who had bribed him. Notwithſtanding this, I reſolved to mention it myſelf to Confu, that I might have it in my power to know where the objection lay, and give a direct anſwer to Yaſine.

I SAW Confu ſoon after at Koſcam. His bark being exhauſted, I brought him more, and he ſeemed to be much better, and in great ſpirits. The time was favourable in all its circumſtances, and I entered into the matter directly. I was very much ſurpriſed to hear him ſay gravely, and without heſitation, "I have as good an opinion of Yaſine as you can have; and I have as bad a one of Abdel Jelleel as any man in Gondar, for which, too, I have ſufficient reaſon, as it is but lately the king told me peeviſhly enough, I did not look to my affairs, (which is true) as he underſtood that the diſtrict was ruined by having been neglected. But I am no longer governor of Ras el Feel, I have reſigned it. I hope they will appoint a wiſer and better man; let him chooſe for his deputy Yaſine, or who elſe he pleaſes, for I have ſworn by the head of the Iteghè, I will not meddle or make with the government of Ras el Feel more.

Tecla Mariam, the king's ſecretary, came in at that inſtant with a number of other people. I wanted to take Confu aſide to aſk him further if he knew who this governor was, but he ſhuffled among the crowd, ſaying, "My mother will tell you all; the man who is appointed is your friend, and I think Yaſine may be the deputy." I now loſt no time in going to Ozoro Eſther to intercede for the government of Ras el Feel for Yaſine.

Among the crowd I met firſt Tecla Mariam, the king's ſecretary, who taking me by the hand, ſaid, with a laughing countenance, "O ho, I wiſh you joy; this is like a man; you are now no ſtranger, but one of us; why was not you at court?" I ſaid I had no particular buſineſs there, but that I came hither to ſee Ayto Confu, that he might ſpeak in favour of Yaſine to get him appointed deputy of Ras el Feel. "Why don't you appoint him yourſelf? ſays he; what has Confu to do with the affair now? You don't intend always to be in leading ſtrings? You may thank the king for yourſelf,

ſelf, but I would never adviſe you to ſpeak one word of Yaſine to him; it is not the cuſtom; you may, if you pleaſe, to Confu, he knows him already. His eſtate lies all around you, and he will enforce your orders if there ſhould be any need."

"PARDON me, Tecla Mariam, ſaid I, if I do not underſtand you. I came here to ſolicit for Yaſine, that Confu or his ſucceſſor would appoint him their deputy, and you anſwer that you adviſe me to appoint him myſelf."—"And ſo I do, replies Tecla Mariam: Who is to appoint him but you? You are governor of Ras el Feel; are you not?" I ſtood motionleſs with aſtoniſhment. "It is no great affair, ſays he, and I hope you will never ſee it. It is a hot, unwholeſome country, full of Mahometans; but its gold is as good as any Chriſtian gold whatever. I wiſh it had been Begemder with all my heart, but there is a good time coming."

AFTER having recovered myſelf a little from my ſurpriſe, I went to Ayto Confu to kiſs his hand as my ſuperior, but this he would by no means ſuffer me to do. A great dinner was provided us by the Iteghé; and Yaſine being ſent for, was appointed, cloathed, that is inveſted, and ordered immediately to Ras el Feel to his government, to make peace with the Daveina, and bring all the horſes he could get with him from thence, or from Atbara. I ſent there alſo that poor man who had given us the ſmall blue beads on the road, as I have already mentioned. The having thus provided for thoſe two men, and ſecured, as I thought, a retreat to Sennaar for myſelf, gave me the firſt real pleaſure that I had received ſince landing at Maſuah; and that day, in company with Heikel, Tecla Mariam, Engedan, Aylo, and Guebra

Denghel, all my great friends and the hopes of this country, I for the firſt time, ſince my arrival in Abyſſinia, abandoned myſelf to joy.

My conſtitution was, however, too much weakened to bear any exceſſes. The day after, when I went home to Emfras, I found myſelf attacked with a ſlow fever, and, thinking that it was the prelude of an ague, with which I was often tormented, I fell to taking bark, without any remiſſion, or, where the remiſſion was very obſcure, I ſhut myſelf up in the houſe, upon my conſtant regimen of boiled rice, with abundant draughts of cold water.

I was at this time told that there was a great commotion at Gondar; that a monk of Debra Libanos, a favourite of the Iteghè and of the king too, had excommunicated Abba Salama in a diſpute about religion at the Itchegué's houſe; and, the day after, Hagi Mahomet, one of Ras Michael's tent-makers, who lived in the town below, through which the high road from Gojam paſſes, came to tell me, that many monks from Gojam had paſſed through the low town, and expreſſed themſelves very much diſſatisfied by hearing that a frank (meaning me) was in the town above. He ſaid that when they came in ſixes and ſevens at a time, there was no fear; but when they returned altogether (as Michael ſometimes made them do) they were like ſo many madmen; therefore, if I reſolved to ſtay at Emfras, he wiſhed I would order him ſend me ſome Mahometan ſoldiers, who would ſtrictly act as I commanded them.

At the ſame time I received news that my great friend, Tecla Mariam, and his daughter of the ſame name, the moſt beautiful woman in Abyſſinia after Ozoro Eſther, were both ill at Gondar. There needed no more for me to repair inſtantly thither. I muffled my head up as great officers generally do when riding near the capital. I paſſed at different times above twenty of theſe fanatics on the road, ſix and ſeven together; but either they did not know me, or at leaſt, if they did, they did not ſay any thing; I came to Ayto Aylo's, who was ſitting, complaining of ſore eyes, with the queen's chamberlain, Ayto Heikel.

After the uſual ſalutation, I aſked Aylo what was the matter in town? and if it was true that Sebaat Gzier had excommunicated Abba Salama? and told him that I had conceived theſe diſputes about faith had been long ago ſettled. He anſwered with an affected gravity, "That it was not ſo; that this was of ſuch importance that he doubted it would throw the country into great convulſions; and he would not adviſe me to be ſeen in the ſtreet."—"Tell me, I beſeech you, ſaid I, what it is about. I hope not the old ſtory of the Franks?"—"No, no, ſays he, a great deal worſe than that, it is about Nebuchadnezzar:"—and he broke out in a great fit of laughter. "The monk of Debra Libanos ſays, that Nebuchadnezzar is a ſaint; and Abba Salama ſays that he was a Pagan, Idolater, and a Turk, and that he is burning in hell fire with Dathan and Abiram."—"Very well, ſaid I, I cannot think he was a Mahometan if he was a Pagan and Idolater; but I am ſure I ſhall make no enemies upon this diſpute."—"You are deceived, ſays he; unleſs you tell your opinion in this country you are reckoned an enemy to both parties. Stay, therefore, all night, and do not appear on the ſtreets;" and, upon my telling them I was going to Tecla Mariam's, who was ill, they roſe with me to go thither, for the ſtricteſt friendſhip ſubſiſted between them. We met there with Ozoro Eſther, who was viſiting the beautiful Tecla Mariam in her indiſpoſition. Seeing Aylo, Heikel, and me together at that time of night, ſhe inſiſted that the young lady and I ſhould be married, and ſhe declared roundly ſhe would ſee it done before ſhe left the houſe. As neither of my patients were very ill, a great deal of mirth followed. Ozoro Eſther ſat late; there was no occaſion for the compliment of ſeeing her home, ſhe had above three hundred men with her.

After ſhe was gone the whole diſcourſe turned upon religion, what we believed or did not believe in our country, and this continued till day-light, when we all agreed to take a little ſleep, then breakfaſt, and go to court. We did ſo, but Aylo went to Koſcam, and Tecla Mariam to the Ras, ſo I met none of them with the king. When I went in he was hearing a pleading upon a cauſe of ſome conſequence, and paying great attention. One of the parties had finiſhed, the other was replying with a great deal of graceful action, and much energy and eloquence.—They were bare down to their very girdle, and would ſeem rather prepared for boxing than for ſpeaking.

This being over, the room was cleared, and I made my proſtration. "I do demand of you, ſays the king abruptly, Whether Nebuchadnezzar is a ſaint or no?" I bowed, ſaying, "Your majeſty knows I am no judge of theſe matters, and it makes me enemies to ſpeak about them."—"I know, ſays he gravely, that you will anſwer my queſtion when I aſk it; let me take care of the reſt."—"I never thought, ſaid I, Sir, that Nebuchadnezzar had any pretenſions to be a

ſaint.

ſaint. He was a ſcourge in God's hand, as is famine or the plague, but that does not make either of them a wholeſome viſitation."—"What! ſays he, Does not God call him his ſervant? Does he not ſay that he did his bidding about Tyre, and that he gave him Egypt to plunder for his recompence? Was not it by God's command he led his people into captivity? and did not he believe in God, when Shadrach, Meſhech, and Abednego eſcaped from the fiery furnace? Surely he muſt be a ſaint."—"I am perfectly ſatisfied, ſaid I, and give my conſent to his canonization, rather than either your majeſty, or Abba Salama, ſhould excommunicate me upon the queſtion." He now laughed out, and ſeemed greatly diverted, and was going to ſpeak, when Tecla Mariam, and a number of others, came in. I withdrew to the ſide with reſpect, as the ſecretary had a ſmall piece of paper in his hand. He ſtaid about two minutes with the king, when the room filled, and the levee began. I wiſhed Tecla Mariam might not be the worſe for laſt night's ſitting up. "The better, the better, ſays he, much the better. You ſee we are becoming all good, day and night we are buſy about religion."—"Are you upon Nebuchadnezzar to-day, friend? ſaid I; the king ſays to me he is a ſaint."—"Juſt ſuch a ſaint, I ſuppoſe, ſays he, as our Ras Michael, who, I believe, is jealous of him, for he is going himſelf to decide this diſpute immediately. Go to the Aſhoa* and you will hear it."

THERE was a number of people in the outer court of the king's houſe, crying very tumultuouſly for a convocation of the church. At twelve o'clock there was no word of Mi-

---

* The largeſt court, or outer ſpace, ſurrounding the king's houſe.

chael at the palace; but I ſaw the members of the council there, and expected he was coming. Inſtead of this, the large kettle-drum, or nagareet, called *the lion*, was carried to the king's gate, which occaſioned great ſpeculation. But preſently proclamation was made in theſe words, given me by Tecla Mariam himſelf:—"Hear! hear! hear! they that pretend they do not hear this, will not be the laſt puniſhed for diſobeying:—Whereas many diſorderly and idle perſons have flocked to this capital for ſome days paſt, and brought no proviſions for themſelves or others, and have frightened the country people from coming to market, whereby all degrees of men, in this capital, are threatened with famine, and ſcarcity is already begun; this is, therefore, to give notice, That if any ſuch people, after twelve o'clock to-morrow, be found in this city, or in the roads adjoining thereto, they ſhall be puniſhed like rebels and robbers, and their fault not preſcribed for ſeven years."

And, in about ten minutes aftewards, another proclamation was made:—"The king orders four hundred Galla of his troops to patrole the ſtreets all the night, and diſperſe ſummarily all ſorts of people that they ſhall find gathered together; commands thirty horſe to patrole between Debra Tzai and Kolla, thirty on the road to Woggora, and thirty on that to Emfras, to protect our ſubjects coming to market, and going about their other lawful buſineſs: They that are wiſe will keep themſelves well when they are ſo." There was no need of a ſecond proclamation. The monks were all wiſe, and returned in an inſtant every man to his home. The Galla were mentioned to terrify only, for they did not exiſt, Ozoro Eſther having cleared the palace of that nation; but the monks knew there would be found people in their place every bit as bad as Galla, and did not chooſe to riſk the trial of the difference.

At this time a piece of bad news was circulated at Gondar, that Kaſmati Boro, whom the Ras had left governor at Damot, had been beaten by Faſil, and obliged to retire to his own country in Gojam, to Stadis Amba, near the paſſage of the Nile, at Minè; and that Faſil, with a larger army of ſtranger Galla than that he had brought to Fagitta, had taken poſſeſſion of Burè, the uſual place of his reſidence. This being privately talked of as true, I aſked Kefla Yaſous in confidence what he knew of it. Upon its being confirmed, I could not diſguiſe my ſorrow, as I conceived that unexpected turn of affairs to be an invincible obſtacle to my reaching the ſource of the Nile. "You are miſtaken, ſays Kefla Yaſous to me, it is the beſt thing can happen to you. Why you deſire to ſee thoſe places I do not know, but this I am ſure of, you never will arrive there with any degree of ſafety while Faſil commands. He is as perfect a Galla as ever forded the Nile; he has neither word, nor oath, nor faith that can bind him; he does miſchief for miſchief's ſake, and then laughs at it."

"Michael, after the battle of Fagitta, propoſed to his army to paſs the rainy ſeaſon at Buré, and quarter the troops in the towns and villages about. He would have ſtaid a year with them, to ſhew that Faſil could not help them, but he was over-ruled. At Hydar Michael (that is, in November next) all Abyſſinia will march againſt him, and he will not ſtay for us, and this time we ſhall not leave his country till we have eaten it bare; and then, at your eaſe, you will ſee every thing, defend yourſelf by your own

force,

force, and be beholden to nobody; and remember what I ſay, peace with Faſil there never will be, for he does not deſire it; nor, till you ſee his head upon a pole, or Michael's army encamped at Burè, will you (if you are wiſe) ever attempt to paſs Maitſha." Memorable words! often afterwards reflected upon, though they were not ſtrictly verified in the extent they were meant when ſpoken.

CHAP. II.

Battle of Banja—Conſpiracy againſt Michael—The Author retires to Emfras—Deſcription of Gondar, Emfras, and Lake Tzana.

AFTER Faſil's defeat at Fagitta, and the affront he received at Aſſoa in the heart of his own country, he had continued his route to Burè, a diſtrict of the Agows, where was his conſtant reſidence. After this he had croſſed the Nile into the country of Bizamo, and Boro de Gago had taken up his reſidence at Buré, when Michael returned to Gondar; but no ſooner had he heard of his arrival in thoſe parts than he marched with a number of horſe, and forced his rival to retire to Gojam.

THE Agows were all loyaliſts in their hearts, had been forced to join Faſil, but, immediately after his defeat, had declared for Michael. The firſt thing, therefore, Faſil did, when returned to Burè, was to attack the Agows on every ſide; a double advantage was ſure to follow this victory, the famiſhing his enemies at Gondar, and converting ſo rich a territory to his own uſe, by extirpating the Agows, and laying it open to be poſſeſſed by his countrymen, the Galla, from Bizamo.

A VERY obſtinate battle was fought at Banja, one of their principal ſettlements, in which the Agows were entirely defeated, ſeven of their chiefs killed, all men of great conſequence, among whom was Ayamico, a very near relation of the king. The news were firſt brought by a ſon of Nanna Georgis, chief of the Agows, who eſcaped from the battle. Michael was at dinner, and I was preſent. It was one of his carouſals for the marriage of Powuſſen, when young Georgis came into the room, in a torn and dirty habit, unattended, and almoſt unperceived, and preſented himſelf at the foot of the table. Michael had then in his hand a cup of gold, it being the excluſive privilege of the governor of the province of Tigré to drink out of ſuch a cup; it was full of wine; before a word was ſpoke, and, upon the firſt appearance of the man, he threw the cup and wine upon the ground, and cried out, I am guilty of the death of theſe people. Every one aroſe, the table was removed, and Georgis told his misfortune, that Nanna Georgis his father, Zeegam Georgis, the next in rank among them, Ayamico the king's relation, and four other chiefs, were ſlain at Banja, and their race nearly extirpated by a victory gained with much bloodſhed, and after cruelly purſued in retaliation for that of Fagitta.

A COUNCIL was immediately called, where it was reſolved, that, though the rainy ſeaſon was at hand, the utmoſt expedition ſhould be made to take the field; that Guſho and Powuſſen ſhould return to their provinces, and increaſe their army to the utmoſt of their power; that the king ſhould take the low road by Foggora and Dara, there to join the troops of Begemder and Amhara, croſs the Nile at the mouth of the lake, above the ſecond cataract, as it is called, and march thence ſtraight to Buré, which, by ſpeedy marches, might be done in five or ſix days. No reſolution was ever embraced with more alacrity; the cauſe of the Agows was the cauſe of Gondar, or famine would elſe immediately follow. The king's troops and thoſe of Michael were all ready, and had juſt refreſhed themſelves by a week's feſtivity.

Gusho and Powuſſen, after having ſworn to Michael that they never would return without Faſil's head, decamped next morning with very different intentions in their hearts; for no ſooner had they reached Begemder than they entered into a conſpiracy in form againſt Michael, which they had long meditated; they had reſolved to make peace with Faſil, and ſwear with him a ſolemn league, that they were but to have one cauſe, one council, and one intereſt, till they had deprived Michael of his life and dignity. The plan was, that, in hopes to join with them, the army ſhould paſs by Dara and the mouth of the lake, as aforeſaid, between that lake, called the lake of Dembea, on the north ſide, and another ſmall lake, which ſeems formerly to have been part of the great one, and is called Court-ohha; on the ſouth is the village of Derdera, and the church of St Michael. Here was to be the ſcene of action; as ſoon as Michael advanced to Derdera, Guſho and Powuſſen were to cloſe him behind on the north; Faſil, from Maitſha, was to appear on his front from the ſouth, whilſt, between Court-ohha and the lake, in the midſt of theſe three armies, Michael was to loſe his liberty or his life. The ſecret was profoundly kept, though known by many; but every one was employed in preparations for the campaign on the king's part, and no ſuſpicion entertained, for nothing coſts an Abyſſinian leſs than to diſſemble.

It had been agreed by Guſho and Powuſſen before parting, in order to deceive Michael, that, ſhould Faſil retire from Buré at their approach, and paſs the Nile into his own country, the King, Ras Michael, and part of the army ſhould remain at Burè all the rainy ſeaſon; that, upon the return of the fair weather, they were all again to aſſemble at Buré, croſs the Nile into Bizamo, and lay waſte the country of the Galla, that the veſtige of habitation ſhould not be ſeen upon it.

All this time I found myſelf declining in health, to which the irregularities of the laſt week had greatly contributed. The King and Ras had ſufficiently provided tents and conveniencies for me, yet I wanted to conſtruct for myſelf a tent, with a large ſlit in the roof, that I might have an opportunity of taking obſervations with my quadrant, without being inquieted by troubleſome or curious viſitors. I therefore obtained leave from the king to go to Emfras, a town about twenty miles ſouth from Gondar, where a number of Mahometan tent-makers lived. Guſho had a houſe there, and a pleaſant garden, which he very willingly gave me the uſe of, with this advice, however, which at the time I did not underſtand, rather to go on to Amhara with him, for I ſhould there ſooner recover my health, and be more in quiet than with the King or Michael. As the king was to paſs immediately under this town, and as moſt of thoſe that loaded and unloaded his tents and baggage were Mahometans, and lived at Emfras, I could not be better ſituated, or more at my liberty and eaſe, than there.

After having taken my leave of the king and the Ras, I paid the ſame compliment to the Iteghè at Koſcam: I had not for ſeveral days been able to wait upon her, on account of the riots during the marriage, where the Ras required my attendance, and would admit of no excuſe. That excellent princeſs endeavoured much to diſſuade me from leaving Gondar. She treated the intention of going to the ſource of the Nile as a fantaſtical folly, unworthy of any man of ſenſe or underſtanding, and very earneſtly adviſed me to ſtay under her protection at Koſcam, till I ſaw whether Ras Michael and the king would return, and then take the firſt good opportunity of returning to my own country through Tigré, the way that I came, before any evil ſhould overtake me.

I excused myſelf the beſt I could. It was not eaſy to do it with any degree of conviction, to people utterly unlearned, and who knew nothing of the prejudice of ages in favour of the attempt I was engaged in. I therefore turned the diſcourſe to profeſſions of gratitude for benefits that I had every day received from her, and for the very great honour that ſhe then did me, when ſhe condeſcended to teſtify her anxiety concerning the fate of a poor unknown traveller like me, who could not poſſibly have any merit but what aroſe from her own gracious and generous ſentiments, and univerſal charity, that extended to every object in proportion as they were helpleſs. "See, ſee, ſays ſhe, how every day of our life puniſhes us with proofs of the perverſeneſs and contradiction of human nature; you are come from Jeruſalem, through vile Turkiſh governments, and hot, unwholeſome climates, to ſee a river and a bog, no part of which you can carry away were it ever ſo valuable, and of which you have in your own country a thouſand larger, better, and cleaner, and you take it ill when I diſcourage you from the purſuit of this fancy, in which you are likely to periſh, without your friends at home ever hearing when or where the accident happened. While I, on the other hand, the mother of kings who have ſat upon the throne of this country more than thirty years, have for my only wiſh, night and day, that, after giving up every thing in the world, I could be conveyed to the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jeruſalem, and beg alms for my ſubſiſtence all my life after, if I could only be buried in the ſtreet within ſight of the gate of that temple where our bleſſed Saviour once lay." This was ſaid in the moſt melancholy tone poſſible, an unuſual gloom hanging upon her countenance. Her deſiring me, however, to ſtay at Koſcam, till I knew whether the king and Michael would return or not, conſidering the large army they were to lead to the field, and the feebleneſs of the ſo-often defeated Faſil, made me from that inſtant apprehend that there was ſomething behind with which I was yet unacquainted.

Gold, and orders for cattle and proviſions while at Emfras, followed this converſation with the queen; this, indeed, had never failed at other times, which, by Ayto Aylo's advice, I never more refuſed. Here I cannot help obſerving the different manner in which three people did the ſame thing. When I received gold from Michael, it was openly from his hand to mine, without compliment, as he paid the reſt of the king's ſervants. When I received it from the king, it was likewiſe from his own hand; it was always when alone, with a fear expreſſed that I ſuffered myſelf to be ſtraitened rather than aſk, and that I did not levy, with ſufficient ſeverity, the money the ſeveral places allotted to me were bound to pay, which, indeed, was always the caſe. The queen, on the other hand, from whom I received conſtant donations, never either produced gold herſelf, nor ſpoke of it before or after, but ſent it by a ſervant of hers to a ſervant of mine, to employ it for the neceſſaries of my family.

I CONFESS I left the queen very much affected with the diſpoſition I had found her in, and, if I had been of a temper to give credit to prognoſtics, and a ſafe way had been opened through Tigré, I ſhould at that time, perhaps, have taken the queen's advice, and returned without ſeeing the fountains of the Nile, in the ſame manner that all the travellers of antiquity, who had ever as yet endeavoured to explore them, had been forced to do; but the prodigious buſtle and preparation which I found was daily making in Gondar, and the aſſurances everybody gave me that, ſafe in the middle of a victorious army, I ſhould ſee, at my leiſure, that famous ſpot, made me reſume my former reſolutions, awakened my ambition, and made me look upon it as a kind of treaſon done to my country, in which ſuch efforts were then making for diſcoveries, to renounce, now it was in my power, the putting them in poſſeſſion of that one which had baffled the courage and perſeverance of the braveſt men in all ages. The pleaſure, too, of herboriſing in an unknown country, ſuch as Emfras was, of continuing to do ſo in ſafety, and the approaching every day to the end of my wiſhes, chaſed away all thoſe gloomy apprehenſions which I imbibed from the appearance and diſcourſe of the queen, and of which I now began to be aſhamed.

Gondar, the metropolis of Abyſſinia, is ſituated upon a hill of conſiderable height, the top of it nearly plain, on which the town is placed. It conſiſts of about ten thouſand families in times of peace; the houſes are chiefly of clay, the roofs thatched in the form of cones, which is always the conſtruction within the tropical rains. On the weſt end of the town is the king's houſe, formerly a ſtructure of conſiderable conſequence; it was a ſquare building, flanked with ſquare towers; it was formerly four ſtoreys high, and, from the top of it, had a magnificent view of all the country ſouthward to the lake Tzana. Great part of this houſe is now in ruins, having been burnt at different times; but there is ſtill ample lodging in the two loweſt floors of it, the audience-chamber being above one hundred and twenty feet long.

A succession of kings have built apartments by the ſide of it of clay only, in the manner and faſhion of their own country; for the palace itſelf was built by maſons from India, in the time of Facilidas, and by ſuch Abyſſinians as had been inſtructed in architecture by the Jeſuits without embracing their religion, and after remained in the country, unconnected with the expulſion of the Portugueſe, during this prince's reign.

The palace, and all its contiguous buildings, are ſurrounded by a ſubſtantial ſtone wall thirty feet high, with battlements upon the outer wall, and a parapet roof between the outer and inner, by which you can go along the whole and look into the ſtreet. There appears to have never been any embraſures for cannon, and the four ſides of this wall are above an Engliſh mile and a half in length.

THE mountain, or hill, on which the town is ſituated, is ſurrounded on every ſide by a deep valley, which has three outlets; the one to the ſouth to Dembea, Maitſha, and the Agows; the ſecond to the north-weſt towards Sennaar, over the high mountain Debra Tzai, or the Mountain of the Sun, at the root of which Koſcam, the palace of the Iteghé, is ſituated, and the low countries of Walkayt and Waldubba; the third is to the north to Woggora, over the high mountain Lamalmon, and ſo on through Tigré to the Red Sea. The river Kahha, coming from the Mountain of the Sun, or Debra Tzai, runs through the valley, and covers all the ſouth of the town; the Angrab, falling from Woggora, ſurrounds it on the N. N. E. Theſe rivers join at the bottom of the hill, about a quarter of a mile ſouth of the town.

IMMEDIATELY upon the bank oppoſite to Gondar, on the other ſide of the river, is a large town of Mahometans of about a thouſand houſes. Theſe are all active and laborious people; great part of them are employed in taking care of the king's and nobility's baggage and field-equipage, both when they take the field and when they return from it. They pitch and ſtrike their tents with ſurpriſing facility and expedition; they load and conduct the mules and the baggage, and are formed into a body under proper officers, but never ſuffered, nor do they chuſe, to fight on either ſide.

Gondar, by a number of obſervations of the ſun and ſtars made by day and night, in the courſe of three years, with an aſtronomical quadrant of three feet radius, and two excellent teleſcopes, and by a mean of all their ſmall differences, is in lat. 12° 34′ 30″; and by many obſervations of the ſatellites of Jupiter, eſpecially the firſt, both in their immerſions and emerſions during that period, I concluded its longitude to be 37° 33′ 0′ eaſt from the meridian of Greenwich.

It was the 4th of April 1770, at eight o'clock in the morning, when I ſet out from Gondar. We paſſed the Kahha, and the Mahometan town, and, about ten in the morning, we came to a conſiderable river called the Mogetch, which runs in a deep, rugged bed of flakey blue ſtones. We croſſed it upon a very ſolid, good bridge of four arches, a convenience ſeldom to be met with in paſſing Abyſſinian rivers, but very neceſſary on this, as, contrary to moſt of their ſtreams, which become dry, or ſtand in pools, on the approach of the ſun, the Mogetch runs conſtantly, by reaſon that its ſources are in the higheſt hills of Woggora, where clouds break plentifully at all ſeaſons of the year. In the rainy months it rolls a prodigious quantity of water into the lake Tzana, and would be abſolutely unpaſſable to people bringing proviſion to the market, were it not for this bridge built by Facilidas; yet it is not judiciouſly placed, being cloſe to the mountain's foot, in the face of a torrent, where it runs ſtrongeſt, and carries along with it ſtones of a prodigious ſize, which luckily, as yet, have injured no part of the bridge. The water of the river Mogetch is not wholeſome, probably from the minerals, or ſtony particles it carries along with it, and the ſlatey ſtrata over which it runs. We have many rivers of this quality in the Alps, eſpecially between mount Cenis and Grenoble.

Delivered now from the ſtrait and rugged country on the banks of the Mogetch, we entered into a very extenſive plain, bounded on the eaſt ſide by the mountains, and on the weſt by the large lake of Dembea, otherwiſe called the lake Tzana, or Bahar Tzana, the Sea of Tzana, which geographers have corrupted into the word Barcena. Rejoiced at laſt that I had elbow-room, I began the moſt laborious ſearch for ſhrubs and herbs all over the plain, my ſervants on one ſide and I on the other, ſearching the country on each ſide of the road. It appeared to our warm imaginations, that the neighbourhood of ſuch a lake, in ſo remote a part of the world, ought infallibly to produce ſomething perfectly beautiful, or altogether new. In this, however, we were diſappointed, as indeed we always were in meadows, and where graſs grew ſo exuberantly as it did all over this plain.

At eleven o'clock we croſſed the river Tedda; here the road divides: that branch to the eaſt leads to Wechnè, in the wild, uncultivated territory of Beleſſen, famous for no production but that of honey.

We continued along the other branch of the road, which led ſouth to Emfras. One mile diſtant on our left is the church of St George. About one o'clock we halted at the church Zingetch Mariam; and a few minutes after, we paſſed the river Gomara, a conſiderable ſtream riſing in Beleſſen, which ſtands in pools during the dry weather, but had now begun to run; its courſe N. E. and S. W. acroſs the plain, after which it falls into the lake Tzana.

At two we halted at Correva, a ſmall village, beautifully ſituated on a gentle-riſing ground, through which the road paſſes in view of the lake, and then again divides; one branch continuing ſouth to Emfras, and ſo on to Foggora and Dara; the other to Mitraha, two ſmall iſlands in the lake, lying S. W. from this at the diſtance of about four hours journey. The road from Correva to Emfras, for the firſt hour, is all in the plain; for the ſecond, along the gentle ſlope of a mountain of no conſiderable height; and the remainder is upon a perfect flat, or along the lake Tzana.

The 5th of April, at five in the morning, we left our preſent ſtation at Correva, where, though we had employed ſeveral hours in the ſearch, we found very little remarkable of either plants or trees, being moſtly of the kind we had already ſeen. We continued our road chiefly to the ſouth, through the ſame ſort of country, till we came to the foot of a mountain, or rather a hill, covered with buſhes and thorny trees, chiefly the common acacia, but of no ſize, and ſeeming not to thrive. I pitched my tent here to ſearch what that cover would produce. There were a great quantity of hares, which I could make no uſe of, the Abyſſinians holding them in abhorrence, as thinking them unclean; but, to make amends, I found great ſtore of Guinea fowls, of the common grey kind we have in Europe, of which I ſhot, in a little time, above a ſcore; and theſe, being perfectly lawful food, proved a very agreeable variety from the raw beef, butter, and honey, which we had lived upon hitherto, and which was to be our diet (it is not an unpleaſant one, at leaſt a part of it) till we reached Emfras.

At eight in the morning I paſſed through Tangouri, a conſiderable village. About a hundred yards on the right from this we have a finer proſpect of the lake than even from Correva itſelf. This village is chiefly inhabited by Mahometans, whoſe occupation it is to go in caravans far to the ſouth, on the other ſide of the Nile, through the ſeveral diſtricts of Galla, to whom they carry beads and large needles, cohol, or Stibium, myrrh, coarſe cloths made in Begemder, and pieces of blue cotton cloths from Surat, called Marowti. They are generally nearly a year abſent, and bring in return ſlaves, civet, wax, hides, and cardomum in large beautiful pods; they bring likewiſe a great quantity of ginger, but that is from farther ſouth, nearer Narea. It appears to me to be a poor trade, as far as I could compute it, conſidering the loſs of time employed in it, the many accidents, extortions, and robberies theſe merchants meet with. Whether it would be ever worth while to follow it on another footing, and under another government, is what I am not qualified enough to ſay.

On the left of Tangouri, divided from it by a plain of about a mile in breadth, ſtands a high rock called Amba Mariam, with a church upon the very ſummit of it. There is no poſſibility of climbing this rock but at one place, and there it is very difficult and rugged; here the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages retreat upon any ſudden alarm or inroad of an enemy.

At nine o'clock, after paſſing a plain, with the lake Tzana all the way on our right, in length about three miles, we came to the banks of the river Gorno, a ſmall but clear ſtream; it riſes near Wechnè, and has a bridge of one arch over it about half a mile above the ford. Its courſe is north and ſouth nearly, and loſes itſelf in the lake between Mitraha and Lamguè. A mile farther we arrived at Emfras, after a very pleaſant, though not intereſting excurſion.

The town is ſituated on a ſteep hill, and the way up to it is almoſt perpendicular like the aſcent of a ladder. The houſes are all placed about the middle of the hill, fronting the weſt, in number about 300. Above theſe houſes are gardens, or rather fields, full of trees and buſhes, without any ſort of order, up to the very top. Emfras commands a view of the whole lake, and part of the country on the other ſide. It was once a royal reſidence. On a ſmall hill is a houſe of Hatzé Hannes, in form of a ſquare tower, now going faſt to ruin.

Emfras is in lat. 12° 12′ 38″ N. and long. 37° 38′ 30″ E. of the meridian of Greenwich. The diſtances and directions of this journey from Gondar were carefully obſerved by a compaſs, and computed by a watch of Ellicot's, after which theſe ſituations were checked by aſtronomical obſervations of latitude and longitude in every way that they could be taken, and it was very ſeldom in a day's journey that we erred a mile in our computation.

The lake of Tzana is by much the largeſt expanſe of water known in that country. Its extent, however, has been greatly exaggerated. Its greateſt breadth is from Dingleber to Lamguè, which, in a line nearly eaſt and weſt, is 35 miles; but it decreaſes greatly at each extremity, where it is not ſometimes above ten miles broad. Its greateſt length is from Bab Baha to a little S. W. and by W. of that part, where the Nile, after having croſſed the end of it by a current always viſible, turns towards Dara in the territory of Alata, which is 49 miles from north to ſouth, and which extent this lake has in length. In the dry months, from October to March, the lake ſhrinks greatly in ſize; but after that all thoſe rivers are full which are on every ſide of it, and fall into the lake, like radii drawn to a center, then it ſwells, and extends itſelf into the plain country, and has of courſe a much larger ſurface.

THERE are forty-five inhabited iſlands in the lake, if you believe the Abyſſinians, who, in every thing, are very great liars. I conceive the number may be about eleven: the principal is Dek, or Daka, or Daga [*], nearly in the middle of the lake; its true extent I cannot ſpecify, never having been there. Beſides Dek, the other iſlands are Halimoon, nearer Gondar; Briguida, nearer Gorgora, and ſtill farther in Galila. All theſe iſlands were formerly uſed as priſons for the great people, or for a voluntary retreat, on account of ſome diſguſt or great misfortune, or as places of ſecurity to depoſit their valuable effects during troubleſome times. When I was in Abyſſinia, a few weeks after what I have been relating, 1300 ounces of gold, confided by the queen to Wel-

---

[*] It ſignifies the hill, or high ground.

leta Chriſtos, her governor of Dek, a man of extraordinary ſanctity, who had faſted for forty years, was ſtolen away by that prieſt, who fled and hid himſelf; nor would the queen ever ſuffer him to be ſearched after or apprehended.

CHAP. III.

The King encamps at Langué—Tranſactions there—Paſſes the Nile, and encamps at Derdera—The Author follows the King.

ON the 12th of May we heard the king had marched to Tedda. Meſſengers from Begemder, and from Guſho of Amhara, had been conſtantly paſſing to and from his majeſty, preſſing Ras Michael to take the field as ſoon as poſſible, to prevent the utter deſtruction of the Agows, which Faſil every day was ſtriving to accompliſh. They put him, moreover, in mind, that the rains were begun; that, in Faſil's country, they were already ſufficient to ſwell the many rivers they had to paſs before they arrived at Burè; they deſired him to reflect, that, with the armies they were bringing to his aſſiſtance, it was more neceſſary to ſave time than ſtay for a number of troops; laſtly, that it was abſolutely uſeleſs to wait for any reinforcement from Tigrè, but that he ſhould rather march by Emfras, Foggora, and Dara, croſs the Nile where it comes out of the lake; while they, with their united armies, paſſed at the bridge near the ſecond cataract, ſixteen miles below, burnt and laid waſte Woodage, Aſahel's country, and joined him at Derdera, between Courtohha and the lake. This was preciſely what Ras Michael himſelf had planned; it embraced the whole country of his enemy, and made his ſcheme of vengeance complete; hitherto not a word had tranſpired that could raiſe the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of treachery.

The 13th, by day-break, Netcho, Fit-Auraris to Ras Michael, paſſed in great haſte below the town towards Foggora. The king had made a forced march from Tedda, and was that night to encamp at a houſe of Guſho's, near Lamguê. This was great expedition, and ſufficiently marked the eagerneſs with which it was undertaken. The effects of the approach of the army were ſoon ſeen. Every one hid what was beſt in his houſe, or fled to the mountains with it. Emfras in a few hours was left quite empty: Ras Michael, advancing at the head of an army, ſpread as much terror as would the approach of the day of judgment. It was then

———————Deſtruction in a monarch's voice
Cried havock, and let ſlip the dogs of war.

For, ſtrict and juſt as he was in time of peace, or in preſerving the police, the ſecurity of the ways, and the poor from the tyranny of the rich, he was moſt licentious and cruel the moment he took the field, eſpecially if that country which he entered had ever ſhewn the leaſt tincture of enmity againſt him.

About 11 o'clock in the morning the king's Fit-Auraris paſſed. He was a near relation of Ayamico, one of the chiefs of the Agows who was a relation of the king, as I have before mentioned, and ſlain by Faſil at the battle of Banja. With him I had contracted a great degree of friendſhip; he had about 50 horſe and 200 foot: as he paſſed at ſeveral places he made proclamation in name of the king, That nobody ſhould leave their houſes, but remain quiet in them without fear, and that every houſe found empty ſhould be burnt. He ſent a ſervant as he paſſed, telling me the king was that night to lie at Lamgué, and deſiring me to ſend him what ſpirits I could ſpare, which I accordingly did, upon his providing a man who could protect the houſes adjoining mine from the robbery and the violence of which the inhabitants were in hourly fear.

About the cloſe of the evening we heard the king's kettle-drums. Forty-five of theſe inſtruments conſtantly go before him, beating all the way while he is on his march. The Mahometan town near the water was plundered in a minute; but the inhabitants had long before removed every thing valuable. Twenty different parties of ſtragglers came up the hill to do the ſame by Emfras. Some of the inhabitants were known, others not ſo, but their houſes had nothing in them; at laſt theſe plunderers all united in mine, demanding meat and drink, and all ſort of accommodation. Our friend, left with us by the Fit-Auraris, reſiſted as much as one man could do with ſticks and whips, and it was a ſcuffle till mid-night; at laſt, having cleared ourſelves of them, luckily without their ſetting fire to the town, we remained quiet for the reſt of the night.

On the 14th, at day-break, I mounted my horſe, with all my men-ſervants, leaving the women-ſervants and an old man to take care of the houſe. It was very unſafe to travel in ſuch company at ſuch an hour. We croſſed the river Arno, a little below Emfras, before we got into the plain; after which we went at a ſmart gallop, and arrived at Langué between eight and nine o'clock.

Early as it was, the king was then in council, and Ras Michael, who had his adviſers aſſembled alſo in his tent, had juſt left it to go to the king's. There was about 500 yards between their tents, and a free avenue is conſtantly left, in which it is a crime to ſtand, or even to croſs, unleſs for meſſengers ſent from the one to the other. The old general diſmounted at the door of the tent; and though I ſaw he perceived us, and was always at other times moſt courteous, he paſſed us without taking the leaſt notice, and entered the tent of the king.

Although my place in the houſehold gave me free acceſs to wherever the king was, I did not chooſe, at that time, to enter the back tent, and place myſelf behind his chair, as I might have done; I rather thought it better to go to the tent of Ozoro Eſther, where I was ſure at leaſt of getting a good breakfaſt: Nor was I diſappointed. As ſoon as I ſhewed myſelf at the door of the tent of that princeſs, who was lying upon a ſofa, the moment ſhe caſt her eyes upon me, cried out, There is Yagoube! there is the man I wanted! The tent was cleared of all but her women, and ſhe then began to enumerate of ſeveral complaints which ſhe thought, before the end of the campaign, would carry her to her grave. It was eaſy to ſee they were of the ſlighteſt kind, though it would not have been agreeable to have told her ſo, for ſhe loved to be thought ill, to be attended, and flattered; ſhe was, however, in theſe circumſtances, ſo perfectly good, ſo converſable, ſo elegant in all her manners, that her phyſician would have been tempted to wiſh never to ſee her well.

She was then with child by Ras Michael; and the late feſtival, upon her niece's marriage with Powuſſen of Begemder, had been much too hard for her conſtitution, always weak and delicate ſince her firſt misfortunes, and the death of Mariam Barea. After giving her my advice, and directing her women how to adminiſter what I was to ſend her, the doors of the tent were thrown open; all our friends came flocking round us, when we preſently ſaw that the interval employed in conſultation had not been ſpent uſeleſsly, for a moſt abundant breakfaſt was produced in wooden platters upon the carpet. There were excellent ſtewed fowls, but ſo inflamed with Cayenne pepper as almoſt to bliſter the mouth; fowls dreſſed with boiled wheat, juſt once broken in the middle, in the manner they are prepared in India, with rice called *pillaw*, this, too, abundantly charged with pepper; Guinea hens, roaſted hard without butter, or any ſort of ſauce, very white, but as tough as leather; above all, the never-failing *brind*, for ſo they call the collops of raw beef, without which nobody could have been ſatisfied; but, what was more agreeable to me, a large quantity of wheat-bread, of Dembea flour, equal in all its qualities to the beſt in London or Paris.

The Abyſſinians ſay, you muſt plant firſt and then water; nobody, therefore, drinks till they have finiſhed eating;

after this the glaſs went chearfully about; there was excellent red wine, but ſtrong, of the nature of cote-roti, brought from Karoota, which is the wine country, about ſix miles ſouth-eaſt from the place where we then were; good new brandy; honey-wine, or hydromel, and a ſpecies of beer called Bouza, both of which were fermented with herbs, or leaves of trees, and made very heady; they are diſagreeable liquors to ſtrangers. Our kind landlady, who never had quitted her ſofa, preſſed about the glaſs in the very briſkeſt manner, reminding us that our time was ſhort, and that the drum would preſently give the ſignal for ſtriking the tents. For my part, this weighed exceedingly with me the contrary way to her intentions, for I began to fear I ſhould not be able to go home, and I was not prepared to go on with the army; beſides, it was indiſpenſibly neceſſary to ſee both the king and Ras Michael, and that I by no means choſe to do when my preſence of mind had left me; I therefore made my apology to Ozoro Eſther, by a meſſage delivered by one of her women, and ſlipt out of the tent to wait upon the king.

I THOUGHT to put on my moſt ſedate appearance, that none of my companions in the king's tent ſhould ſee that I was affected with liquor; tho' intoxication in Abyſſinia is neither uncommon nor a reproach, when you are not engaged in buſineſs or attendance. I therefore went on as compoſedly as poſſible, without recollecting that I had already advanced near a hundred yards, walking on that forbidden precinct or avenue between the king's tent and Ras Michael's, where nobody interrupted me. The eaſe with which I proceeded, among ſuch a crowd and buſtle, ſoon brought my tranſgreſſion to my mind, and I hurried out of the forbidden place in an inſtant.

I MET ſeveral of my acquaintance, who accompanied me to the king's tent. It was now noon; a plentiful dinner or breakfaſt was waiting, which I had abſolutely refuſed to partake of till I had ſeen the king. Thinking all was a ſecret that had paſſed at Ozoro Eſther's, I lifted the curtain behind the king's chair, and coming round till nearly oppoſite to him, I was about to perform the uſual proſtration, when in the very inſtant the young prince George, who was ſtanding oppoſite to me on the king his brother's right hand, ſtept forward and laid his hand acroſs my breaſt as if to prevent me from kneeling; then turning to the king, who was ſitting as uſual in his chair in the alcove, Sir, ſays he, before you allow Yagoube to kneel, you ſhould firſt provide two men to lift him up again, for Ozoro Eſther has given him ſo much wine that he will never be able to do it himſelf.

THOUGH it was almoſt impoſſible to avoid laughing, it was viſible the king conſtrained himſelf, and was not pleaſed. The drink had really this good effect, that it made me leſs abaſhed than I otherwiſe ſhould have been at this unexpected ſally of the young prince. I was, however, ſomewhat diſconcerted, and made my proſtration perhaps leſs gracefully than at another time, and this raiſed the merriment of thoſe in waiting, as attributing it to intoxication. Upon riſing, the king moſt graciouſly ſtretched out his hand for me to kiſs. While I was holding his hand, he ſaid to his brother, coldly, Surely if you thought him drunk, you muſt have expected a reply; in that caſe, it would have

been

been more prudent in you, and more civil, not to have made your obſervation.

The prince was much abaſhed. I haſtened acroſs the carpet, and took both his hands and kiſſed them; the laughers did not ſeem much at their eaſe, eſpecially when I turned and ſtood before the king. He was kind, ſenſible, compoſed, and condeſcending; he complained that I had abandoned him; aſked if I had been well-uſed at Emfras, and doubted that I had wanted every thing; but I ſent you nothing on purpoſe, ſays he, becauſe you ſaid faſting would do you good after too much feaſting at Gondar, and I knew that hunger would bring you ſoon back again to us. If your majeſty, ſaid I, takes the prince's word, I have been carouſing to-day in your camp more than ever I did at Gondar; and, I do aſſure your majeſty, prince George's reflections were not without foundation.

Come, come, ſays the king, Georgis is your firm and faſt friend, and ſo he ought, he owes it to you that he is ſo able a horſeman and ſo good a markſman, without which he could never be more than a common ſoldier. He has commanded a diviſion of the army to-day;—"Of 500 horſe, cries out the prince in extacy; and, when the king my brother to-morrow leads the van, you ſhall be my Fit-Auraris, if you pleaſe, when we paſs the Nile, and with my party I ſhall ſcour Maitſha." I ſhould be very unhappy, prince, ſaid I, to have a charge of that importance, for which I know myſelf to be totally unqualified; there are many brave men who have a title to that office, and who will fill it with honour to themſelves and ſafety to your perſon. So you will not truſt yourſelf, ſays the prince, with me and my party when we ſhall croſs the

Nile? Are you angry with me, Yagoube, or are you afraid of Woodage Aſahel? Were you in earneſt, prince, in what you now ſay, replied I, you ſuppoſe two things, both greater reproaches than that of being overtaken with wine. Aſſure yourſelf I am, and always ſhall be, your moſt affectionate and moſt faithful ſervant; and that I ſhall think it an honour to follow you in Maitſha, or elſewhere, even as a common horſeman, though, inſtead of one, there were in it ten thouſand Woodage Aſahels. O ho! ſays the king, then you are all friends; and I muſt tell you one thing, Georgis is more drunk with the thoughts of his command to-day than any ſoldier in my camp will be to-night with bouza. And this, indeed, ſeemed to be the caſe, for he was elſe a prince rather reſerved and ſparing of words, eſpecially before his brother.

Tell me, Yagoube, continues the king, and tell me truly—at that very inſtant came in a meſſenger from Ras Michael, who, going round the chair without ſaluting, ſpoke to the king, upon which the room was cleared; but I after learned, that news were received from Begemder, that Powuſſen and his troops were ready to march, but that two of Guſho's nephews had rebelled, whom it had taken ſome time to ſubdue; that another meſſenger was left behind, but had fallen ſick at Aringo, who, however, would come forward as ſoon as poſſible with his maſter's meſſage, and would be probably at the camp that night. He brought alſo as undoubted intelligence, that Faſil, upon hearing Ras Michael's march, was preparing to repaſs the Nile into the country of the Galla. This occaſioned very great doubts, becauſe diſpatches had arrived from Nanna Georgis's ſon, the day before at Tedda, which declared that Faſil had decamped from Buré that very day the meſſenger came away, advancing northward towards Gondar, but with what intention he could not ſay; and this was well known to be intelligence that might be ſtrictly and certainly relied upon.

On the 15th, the king decamped early in the morning, and, as prince George had ſaid the night before, led the van in perſon; a flattering mark of confidence that Ras Michael had put in him now for the firſt time, of which the king was very ſenſible. The Ras, however, had given him a dry nurſe*, as it is called, in Billetana Gueta Welleta Michael, an old and approved officer, trained to war from his infancy, and ſurrounded with the moſt tried of the troops of Tigré. The king halted at the river Gomara, but advanced that ſame night to the paſſage where the Nile comes out of the lake Tzana, and reſumes again the appearance of a river.

The king remained the 15th and 16th encamped upon the Nile. Several things that ſhould have given umbrage, and begot ſuſpicion, happened while they were in this ſituation. Aylo, governor of Gojam, had been ſummoned to aſſiſt Ras Michael when Powuſſen and Guſho ſhould march to join him with their forces of Begemder and Amhara, and his mother Ozoro Welleta Iſrael, then at Gondar, had promiſed he ſhould not fail. This lady was younger ſiſter to Ozoro Eſther; both were daughters of the Iteghé. She was as beautiful as Ozoro Eſther, but very much her inferior in behaviour, character, and conduct: ſhe had refuſed the old Ras, who aſked her in marriage before he was called from Tigré

---

* Maguzet.

Tigrè to Gondar, and a mortal hatred had followed her refuſal. It was therefore reported, that he was heard to ſay, he would order the eyes of Welleta Iſrael to be pulled out, if Aylo her ſon did not join him. It muſt have been a man ſuch as Ras Michael that could form ſuch a reſolution, for Welleta Iſrael's eyes were moſt captivating. She was then in the camp with her ſiſter.

A SINGLE ſmall tent had appeared the evening of the 15th on the other ſide of the Nile, and, on the morning of the 16th, Welleta Iſrael and the tent were miſſing: ſhe boldly made her eſcape in the night. The tent had probably concealed her ſon Aylo, or ſome of his friends, to ſhow her the paſſage; for the Nile there was both broad and deep, rolling along a prodigious maſs of water, with large, black, ſlippery ſtones at the bottom. It was therefore a very arduous, bold undertaking for ſoldiers and men accuſtomed to paſs rivers in the day-time; but for a woman, and in the night, too, with all the hurry that the fear of being intercepted muſt have occaſioned, it was ſo extraordinary as to exceed all belief. But ſhe was conducted by an intrepid leader, for with her deſerted Ayto Engedan ſon of Kaſmati Eſhté, and conſequently nephew to Ozoro Welleta Iſrael; but their own inclinations had given them ſtill a nearer relation than the degree received from their parents, or decency ſhould have permitted. All the camp had trembled for Welleta Iſrael; and every one now rejoiced that ſo bold an attempt had been attended with the ſucceſs it merited. It was neceſſary, however, to diſſemble before Michael, who, intent upon avenging the Agows againſt Faſil, carried his reflections at that time no further; for Aylo's not coming was attributed to the influence of Faſil, whoſe government of

Damot joins Gojam, and it was even ſaid, that Welleta Iſrael, his mother, had been the occaſion of this, from her hatred to Michael and her attachment to Faſil; the firſt cauſe was ſufficiently apparent, the laſt had formerly been no leſs ſo.

On the 17th, after ſun-riſe, the king paſſed the Nile, and encamped at a ſmall village on the other ſide, called Tſoomwa, where his Fit-Auraris had taken poſt early in the morning. I have often mentioned this officer without explanation, and perhaps it may now be right to ſtate his duty. The Fit-Auraris is an officer depending immediately upon the commander in chief, and correſponding with him directly, without receiving orders from any other perſon. He is always one of the braveſt, moſt robuſt, and moſt experienced men in the ſervice; he knows, with the utmoſt exactneſs, the diſtance of places, the depth of rivers, the ſtate of the fords, the thickneſs of the woods, and the extent of them; in a word, the whole face of the country in detail. His party is always adapted to the country in which the war is; ſometimes it is entirely compoſed of horſe, ſometimes of foot, but generally of a mixture of both. He has the management of the intelligence and direction of the ſpies. He is likewiſe limited to no number of troops; ſometimes he has 1000 men, ſometimes 200. In time of real danger he has generally about 300, all picked from the whole army at his pleaſure; he had not now about 50 horſe, as it was not yet thought to be the time of real buſineſs or danger.

As the poſt of Fit-Auraris is a place of great truſt, ſo it is endowed with proportionable emoluments. The king's

Fit-Auraris has territories aſſigned him in every province that he ever paſſes through, ſo has that of the Ras, if he commands in chief. Every governor of a province has alſo an officer of this name, who has a revenue allowed him within his own province. It is a place of great fatigue. Their poſt is at different diſtances from the van of the army, according to the circumſtances of the war; ſometimes a day's march, ſometimes four or ſix hours. As he paſſes on he fixes a lance, with a flag upon it, in the place where the king's tent is to be pitched that night, or where he is to halt that day. He has couriers, or light runners, through which he conſtantly correſponds with the army; whenever he ſees the enemy, he ſends immediate advice, and falls back himſelf, or advances farther, according as his orders are.

From Tſoomwa the king marched on, a ſhort day's march, to Derdera, and encamped near the church of St Michael. Derdera, was a collection of ſmall villages, between the lake Dembea and Court-ohha, where, it will be remembered, the agreement was the confederates ſhould incloſe Michael, and give him battle; but he had now loſt all patience, as there was no appearance of either Guſho or Powuſſen; and being, beſides, in an enemy's country, he began to proceed in his uſual manner, by giving orders to lay waſte the whole adjacent territory with fire and ſword. The whole line of march, two day's journey in breadth from the lake, was ſet on fire; the people who could not eſcape were ſlain, and every wanton barbarity permitted.

The king's paſſage of the Nile was the ſignal given for me to ſet out to join him. It was the 18th of May, at noon, I left Emfras, my courſe being ſouthward whilſt in the plain of Mitraha. At three o'clock we entered among a few hills of no conſideration, and, ſoon after, began to coaſt cloſe along the ſide of the lake Tzana; we ſaw this day a great number of hippopotami; ſome ſwimming in the lake at a ſmall diſtance, ſome riſing from feeding on the high graſs in the meadows, and walking, ſeemingly at great leiſure, till they plunged themſelves out of ſight. They are exceeding cautious and ſhy while on land, and not to be approached near enough to do execution with the beſt rifle-gun. At four in the afternoon we halted, and paſſed the night at Lamgué, a village ſituated a few paces from the ſide of the lake.

On the 19th of May we left Lamgué about ſix in the morning, our courſe ſouth and by weſt, and at eight we found ourſelves in the middle of twenty-five or thirty villages called Nabca, ſtretching for the length of ſeven or eight miles; a few minutes afterwards we came to the river Reb, which falls into the lake a little north-weſt of the place where we now were. Cloſe by where the Reb joins the lake is a ſmall village of Pagans, called Waito, who live quite ſeparate from the Abyſſinians, and are held by them in utter abhorrence, ſo that to touch them, or any thing that belongs to them, makes a man unclean all that day till the evening, ſeparates him from his family and friends, and excludes him from the church and all divine ſervice, till he is waſhed and purified on the following day. Part of this averſion is certainly owing to their manner of feeding; for their only profeſſion is killing the crocodile and hippopotamus, which they make their daily ſuſtenance. They have a moſt abominable ſtench, are exceedingly wan, or ill-coloured, very lean, and die often, as is ſaid, of the louſy diſeaſe. There are, indeed, no crocodiles in the lake Tzana, owing, as it is ſaid, to the cataracts, which they cannot get up. However, as they are amphibious animals, and walk very well on ſhore, I think they might ſurmount this difficulty as eaſily as the hippopotamus; I rather think the cauſe is the coldneſs of the water and climate, which does not agree with the crocodile, but much with the river-horſe.

The Waito ſpeak a language radically different from any of thoſe in Abyſſinia; but though I have often endeavoured to get ſome inſight into this, their religion, and cuſtoms, I could never ſo far ſucceed as to be able to give the public any certain information. A falſe account in ſuch caſes is certainly worſe than no account at all. I once deſired the king to order that one of them might be brought to Gondar. Two men, an old and a young one, were accordingly brought from the lake, but they would neither anſwer nor underſtand any queſtions; partly, I believe, through fear, partly from obſtinacy. The king at this became ſo angry that he ordered them both to be hanged; they ſeemed perfectly unconcerned, and it was with ſome difficulty I procured their releaſe; I never therefore made an experiment of that kind afterwards. The Abyſſinians believe they are ſorcerers, can bewitch with their eyes, and occaſion death by their charms even at a conſiderable diſtance. It is likely, if that had been ſo, theſe two would have tried their power upon me, of which I do not recollect to have ever been ſenſible.

We paſſed the Reb at nine o'clock in the morning. It riſes high in the mountains of Begemder, and is one of thoſe rivers that continue running the whole year, and has a tolerable ford, although it was viſibly increaſed by rain.

We continued our journey in ſight of many villages till, three quarters after twelve, we came to the river Gomara, where we ſtaid in ſearch of trees and herbs the reſt of the day. At night we received a meſſage from Ayto Adigo, Shum, or governor, of Karoota. He was an officer of confidence of the Iteghé's; had been a great friend of Mariam Barea's, one of whoſe vaſſals he was, and in his heart an inveterate enemy to Ras Michael and the new ſucceſſion. Ever ſince the murder of Joas he had not ventured to Gondar. When I firſt came there the Ras had given his houſe, as that of an outlaw, to me. Afterwards, as ſoon as he returned, I offered immediately to ſurrender it to him; but he would not by any means accept it, but aſked leave to pitch his tent in one of the courts ſurrounded with walls, for it was a ſpacious building. Perhaps it was the beſt ſituation he could have choſen, for we did him great ſervice by the means of Ozoro Eſther, as he was but very ill-looked upon, and was rich enough to be conſidered as an object of Ras Michael's rapacity and avarice. Our neighbourhood occaſioned us to paſs many evenings together, and we contracted a friendſhip, the rather becauſe he was a ſervant of the Iteghè, and we were known favourites of Ozoro Eſther.

CHAP. IV.

Paſs the River Gomara—Remarkable Accident there—Arrive at Dara—Viſit the great Cataract of Alata—Leave Dara, and reſume our Journey.

ON the 20th of May, between ſix and ſeven in the morning, as Adigo was not arrived, I ſent the baggage and tents that we had with us forward with Strates, a Greek, who was an avowed enemy to all learned inquiries or botanical reſearches. My orders were to encamp at Dara, in ſome convenient place near the houſe of Negadé Ras Mahomet. In the mean time I ſtaid expecting Ayto Adigo's arrival; he came near eleven o'clock. As a temporary ſhelter from the ſun, a cloak upon croſs ſticks was ſet up, inſtead of a tent, to ſave time. We ſat down together to ſuch fare as Adigo had brought along with him; it was a ſoldier's dinner, coarſe and plentiful. Adigo told me Kaſmati Ayabdar, an uncle of Guſho, had left his houſe the night before, accompanied by the men of Foggora, the country where we then were of which he was governor, and had taken the high road to join the forces of Begemder.

Netcho, a near relation of the old queen, arrived from Kuara juſt as we were ſitting down to dinner. He had about 50 horſe and 200 foot, all bad troops, and ill armed; he was, however, a reſpectable, tried veteran, who having had many opportunities of becoming rich, gave the whole to his ſoldiers, and thoſe of his dependents that lived with him; on which account he was extremely beloved, and it was hoped that, if the iſſue of this campaign was favourable, Ras Michael would make him governor of Kuara, in room of Coque Abou Barea, a man of a very different character, who had intruded himſelf into that province by the power of Faſil, and after maintained himſelf in it by open rebellion.

The mules that had hitherto carried my quadrant and teleſcopes being bad, I had luckily kept them behind, in hopes that either Adigo or Netcho would ſupply me with better; and I had now placed them upon the freſh mules I had obtained, and had not ſent them on with the ſervants, and we were then taking a friendly glaſs. It was, I ſuppoſe, about noon, when we ſaw our ſervants coming back, and Strates alſo among the reſt, ſtript of every thing that he had, except a cotton night-cap, which he wore on his head. The ſervants ſwam over the Gomara immediately, nor was Strates interrupted, but paſſed at the ford. They told us that Guſho and Powuſſen were in rebellion againſt the king, and confederated with Faſil, that they were advancing faſt to cut off the Ras's retreat to Gondar, and that Guebra Mehedin, and Confu, Powuſſen's Fit-Auraris, had fallen in with our ſervants; and plundered them, as belonging to the king and the Ras.

I was, for ſome minutes, in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment at this torrent of bad news. Whether the others knew more than I, it is impoſſible to ſay; diſſimulation, in all ranks of theſe people, is as natural as breathing. Guebra Mehedin and Confu were the Iteghé's two nephews, ſons of Baſha Euſebius her brother, a worthleſs man, and his ſons no better. They were young men, however, whom I ſaw continually at the queen's palace, and to whom I ſhould have gone immediately without fear, if I had known their houſes had been in my way, and they happened to be near Lebec at the hot wells; notwithſtanding their rank, they were of ſuch diſſipated manners, that they were of no account, but treated as caſtaways in the houſe of the queen their aunt, and never, as far as I knew, had entered into the preſence of the king. I had often ate and drank with them, however, in the houſe of Ayto Engedan, their couſin-german, who was gone off with Welleta Iſrael his aunt, at the paſſage of the Nile as before mentioned. They had beat Strates, who was their intimate acquaintance, violently; as alſo two others of my ſervants, to make them confeſs in what package the gold was. They had taken from them alſo a large blunderbuſs, given me by the Swediſh conſul, Brander, at Algiers; a pair of piſtols, a double-barrelled gun, and a Turkiſh ſword mounted with ſilver, which, as there was then no proſpect of their being immediately needed, were ſent forward with the baggage.

Netcho and Adigo, and all preſent, agreed that the whole was a fiction, and that, ſuppoſing the account to be true that Begemder and Amhara were in rebellion, young, wild, and worthleſs people, like Guebra Mehedin and Confu, could never be thoſe pitched upon for the reſpectable office of Fit-Auraris. The worſt that could be, as they conceived, was, that ſome miſunderſtanding might ſubſiſt between Ras Michael and the governors above named, but Faſil was undoubtedly the enemy of them all. They imagined therefore that this diſguſt, if any, would be ſoon got over, and concluded that it was highly abſurd, in any caſe, to attack me, as they certainly knew that the queen, Powuſſen, and Guſho, would be full as ill-pleaſed with it as the king or Ras Michael. It therefore appeared to them, as it alſo did to me, that theſe wild, young men, had taken the firſt ſurmiſe of a rebellion, as a pretence for robbing all that came in their way, and that I, unfortunately, had been the firſt.

We were in the middle of this converſation when the parties appeared. They had, perhaps, an hundred horſe, and were ſcattered about a large plain, ſkirmiſhing, playing, purſuing one another, ſhrieking and hooping like ſo many frantic people. They ſtopt, however, upon coming nearer, ſeeing the reſpectable figure that we made, juſt ready to paſs the ford, which alone divided us. Our ſervants had neither ſeen Netcho nor Adigo, when they went in the morning, though they knew Adigo was expected, and theſe marauders hoped to have intercepted me, thinly accompanied, as they had done my baggage.

Guebra Mehedin and his brother approached nearer the banks than the reſt, and a ſervant was ſent from them, who croſſed the river to us, upbraiding Ayto Adigo with protecting a Frank proſcribed by the laws of their country, and alſo with marching to the aſſiſtance of Ras Michael, the murderer of his ſovereign, offering at the ſame time to divide the ſpoil with him if he would ſurrender me and mine to him. Servants here, who carry meſſages in time of war between the contending parties, are held ſacred like heralds. They are ſent even with inſults and defiances; but it is conſtantly underſtood that their errand protects them from ſuffering any harm, whether on the road, or when in words they perform theſe fooliſh, uſeleſs commiſſions.

Adigo and Netcho were above obſerving this punctilio with robbers. Some were for cutting the ſervant's ears off, and ſome for carrying him bound to Ras Michael; I begged they would let him go: and Netcho ſent word by him to Guebra Mehedin to get the goods and mules he had robbed us of together, for he was coming over to ſhare them with him. The ſervants having given the meſſenger a ſevere drubbing with ſticks, torn the cloth from about his middle, and twiſted it about his neck like a cord, in that plight ſent him back to Guebra Mehedin, and we all prepared to take the ford acroſs the river. Guebra Mehedin, who ſaw his ſervant thus diſgraced returning towards him, and a conſiderable motion among the troops, advanced a few ſteps with two or three more of his company, ſtretching forth his hand and crying out, but ſtill at a diſtance that we could not hear. He was diſtinguiſhed by a red ſaſh of ſilk twiſted about his head. I, with my ſervants and attendants, firſt paſſed the river at the ford, and I had no ſooner got up the bank, and ſtood upon firm ground, than I fired two ſhots at him; the one, from a Turkiſh rifle, ſeemed to have given him great apprehenſions, or elſe to have wounded him, for,

after

after four or five of his people had flocked about him, they galloped all off acroſs the plain of Boggora towards Lebeo.

Netcho had paſſed the Gomara cloſe after me, crying upon me to let him go firſt, but Adigo declared his reſolution to go no farther. He hated Ras Michael; was a companion of Powuſſen and Guſho, as well as a neighbour, and wiſhed for a revolution with all his heart. He, therefore, returned to Emfras and Karoota, and with him I ſent five of my ſervants, deſiring him to eſcort my quadrant, clock, and teleſcopes into the iſland of Mitraha, and deliver them to Tecla Georgis, the king's ſervant, governor of that iſland. Adigo, being left alone by the ſervants, could not be perſuaded but ſome great treaſure was hid in thoſe boxes. He, therefore, carried them to his houſe, and uſed the ſervants well, but opened and examined every one of the packages. Surpriſed to find nothing but iron and ruſty braſs, he cloſed them again, and delivered them ſafely to Tecla Georgis, there to be kept for that campaign.

Delivered now from the embarraſſment of my baggage by the induſtry of Guebra Mehedin, and of my caſes and boxes by my own inclination, we ſet out with Netcho to take up our quarters with Negadè Ras Mahomet at Dara, where we arrived in the afternoon, having picked up one of our mules in the way, with a couple of carpets and ſome kitchen furniture upon it, all the reſt being carried off.

The object which now firſt preſented itſelf, and called our attention, was Strates in a night-cap, in other reſpects perfectly naked, with a long gun upon his ſhoulder, without powder or ſhot, but prancing and capering about in a great paſſion, and ſwearing a number of Greek oaths, which nobody there underſtood a word of but myſelf. This ſpectacle was rather diverting for ſome minutes; at laſt Netcho, though I believe he was not over-well provided, gave him an upper cloak to wrap round him. It was not then warm, indeed, but it was not very cold. After recovering the mule, he got on between the panniers, and I adviſed him to put the ſmalleſt carpet about him, which he ſoon after did; he had not yet ſpoke a word to me from ſullenneſs.

"STRATES, ſaid I, my good friend, lay aſide that long gun, for you will fall and break it, beſides, it hath not been charged ſince it was fired at Guebra Mehedin. If you carry it to ſtrike terror, it is altogether unneceſſary; for, if we had dreſſed you as you are now accoutred, when we ſent you forward with the baggage to Dara, there is not a thief in all Begemder would have ventured to come near you." He looked at me with a countenance full of anger and contempt, though he ſaid nothing; but, in Greek, pronounced anathemas againſt the father of Guebra Mehedin, according to the Greek form of curſing. "Curſe himſelf and his brother, ſaid I, and not his father, for he has been dead theſe twenty years."—"I will curſe whom I pleaſe, ſays he, in a great paſſion, I curſe his father, himſelf, and his brother, the Ras, and the king, and everybody that has brought me into ſuch a ſcrape as I have been to-day. I have been ſtripped naked, and within an inch of having my throat cut, beſides being gelded; and well may you laugh now at the figure I make. If you had ſeen thoſe damned crooked knives, with their black hands, all begging, as if it had been for charity, to be allowed to do my buſineſs, you would have been glad for my making no worſe figure to-night than I do with this carpet upon my head."

"My dear Strates, ſaid I, it is the fortune of war, and many princes and great men, who, at this moment I am ſpeaking to you, live in the enjoyment of every thing they can deſire, before a month expires, perhaps, will be ſtretched on the cold ground, a prey to the birds and wild beaſts of the field, without ſo much as a carpet to cover them ſuch as you have. You as yet are only frightened; though, it is true, a man may be as well killed as frightened to death." "Sir, ſays he, in a violent rage, that I deny, it is not the ſame? a man that is killed feels no more, but he that is frightened to death, *as I have been to-day*, ſuffers ten thouſand times more than if he had been killed outright."—"Well, ſaid I, Strates, I will not diſpute with you; I believe they ſuffer much the ſame after they are dead; but you, I thank God, have only loſt your cloaths, and you are now moſt comfortably, though not ornamentally, wrapped up in my carpet; as ſoon as we get to Dara, you ſhall be dreſſed from head to foot, by Negadé Ras Mahomet, at the expence of the king, in better cloaths than you ever wore in your life, at leaſt ſince I knew you; only give me your gun till your paſſion is allayed; you know it is a valuable one which I never quit."

He then gave me the gun ſullenly enough; and I continued, "I will this very night preſent you with one of the handſomeſt Turkiſh ſaſhes that Mahomet has to ſell. I ſaw him in the king's houſe, with many new ones that he had procured, a little before I went to Emfras." I cannot pretend

tend to ſay whether his viſage cleared up, for he was ſtill perfectly hid with the carpet, as it began to grow cool as well as dark; but the ſight of the lights in the houſes of Dara, and the promiſe of the new cloaths and the ſaſh, had very much ſoftened his voice and expreſſions.

"Sir, ſays he, bringing his mule cloſe up to mine, now, *you are not in a paſſion*, one may ſpeak to you. Do you not think that it is tempting Providence to come ſo far from your own country to ſeek theſe d—n'd weeds and flowers, at the riſk of having your throat cut every hour of the day, and, what is *worſe*, my throat cut too, and of being gelded into the bargain? Are there no weeds, and bogs, and rivers in your own country? what have you to do with that d—n'd Nile, where he riſes, or whether he riſes at all, or not? What will all thoſe trees and branches do for you when theſe horrid blacks have done your buſineſs, as they were near doing mine? He then made a ſign towards his girdle with his fingers, which made me underſtand what he meant—"Nile, ſays he, curſe upon his father's head the day that he was born."

"Strates, replied I gravely, he has no father, and was never *born*. *Fertur ſine teſte creatus*, ſays the poet."—"There's your Latin again; the poet is an aſs and a blockhead, let him be who he will, continued Strates; and I do maintain, whether you be angry or not, that at Stanchio and Scio there are finer trees than ever you ſaw, or will ſee in Abyſſinia. There is a tree, ſays he, that fifty men like you, ſpreading all your hands round about, would not be able to graſp it. Nay, it is not a tree, it is but half a tree; it is as old, I believe, as Methuſelah: Did you ever ſee it?"—"I tell you, friend Strates, ſaid I, I never was at Scio in my life, and, therefore, could not ſee it."—"Nor at Stanchio?"—Yes, I have been at Stanchio, and have ſeen the large plane-tree there. I believe it may be about eighteeen or twenty feet in circumference."—"Galen and Hippocrates lived, adds he, there together, 2000 years before our Saviour: Did you ever hear that?"—"I have read, ſaid I, Strates, that, about 500 years before Chriſt, Hippocrates did live there; but Galen was not born till 200 years after Chriſt. I do not recollect if he was ever at Stanchio; but, ſurely, never lived there with Hippocrates.

Strates was in the middle of a declaration, that thoſe were all falſehoods of Latins and Papiſts; and we were aſcending, compoſedly enough, through a narrow, rocky road, thick-covered with high trees and buſhes, when, juſt before our entrance into the village of Dara, a gun was fired, and the ball diſtinctly heard paſſing through the leaves among the branches. This occaſioned a great alarm to our diſputant, who immediately ſuppoſed that Guebra Mehedin, and all his robbers, were there expreſsly waiting for us; nor was he the only perſon that felt uneaſily. Netcho, myſelf, and the generality of his officers, thought this was more than probable; we all therefore diſmounted, loaded our fire-arms, halted till all our ſtragglers came up, and conſulted what we were to do.

Strates, though tired and naked, found it was better to go back under his carpet, and, if poſſible, overtake Ayto Adigo, than take poſſeſſion of his new cloaths from Negadé Ras Mahomet, with the riſk of meeting Guebra Mehedin there. In vain I remonſtrated to him, that he, of all others, had nothing to loſe but Netcho's old cloak and the carpet. His fears, however, made him think otherwiſe, nor could he baniſh his apprehenſions of the crooked knives, and, what he called, *the operation.* Netcho having ordered and converſed with his men in his own language, which I did not underſtand, ſaid after, with great compoſure and firm tone of voice, That he had come to lodge in the market-place of Dara that night, and would not be put out of his quarters by boys of the character of Mehedin and Confu; that, in his preſent circumſtances, with the few troops he had, he did not ſeek to fight, but even with this force, ſuch as it was, if attacked, he would not decline it.—Whatever country, or whatever diſtance of time and place heroes live at, their hearts are always in uniſon, and ſpeak the ſame language on ſimilar and great occaſions. There old Netcho, without having ever heard of Shakeſpeare, repeated the very words that, 300 years ago, our great king Henry V. did before the battle of Agincourt:—

> The ſum of all my anſwer is but this,
> We would not ſeek a battle as we are;
> Yet, as we are, we ſay we will not ſhun it.
> So tell your maſter———
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

We had not advanced but a few paces, before two of the town came to us; the noiſe of our approach had been heard, and all the dogs had been barking for half an hour. Soon after, arrived a ſon of Negadé Ras Mahomet, who aſſured us all was in peace; that they had been expecting us and Ayto Adigo with us; that he heard nothing of Guebra Mehedin, only that he had retreated with great precipitation homewards acroſs the plain, as they apprehended, from fear of the approach of our party. He had, indeed, for ſome days, been guilty of great irregularities; had ſlain two men, and wounded the ſon of Mahomet, the Shum, or chief of Alata, in attempting to take from him the revenue due from that territory to the king; after which they had been beat back by Mahomet without their booty, and nothing more was known of them.

This brought us to Negadè Ras Mahomet's houſe, who killed a cow for Netcho, or rather allowed him to kill one for himſelf; for it is equal to a renunciation of Chriſtianity to eat meat when the beaſt is ſlaughtered by a Mahometan. Strates, who from his infancy, in his own country, had fared on nothing elſe, was not ſo ſcrupulous, though he concealed it; he therefore had a very hearty ſupper privately with Negadé Ras Mahomet and his family, who very willingly promiſed to get his new cloaths ready by the next morning.

As I was myſelf, however, full of thoughts upon the difficulties and dangers I was already engaged in, and of the proſpect of ſtill greater before me, I had no ſtomach for either of their ſuppers, but ordered ſome coffee, and went to bed. After I lay down I deſired Negadè Ras Mahomet to come to me, and, when we were alone, I interrogated him if he knew any thing of the rebellion in Begemder. At firſt he declared he did not; he laughed at the notion of Guebra Mehedin and Confu being Fit-Auraris to Guſho and Powuſſen, and ſaid, that either of theſe generals would hang them the firſt time they came into their hands. He told me, however, that Woodage Aſahel had been aſſembling troops, and had committed ſome cruelties upon the king's ſervants in Maitſha; but this, he imagined, was at the inſtigation of Faſil, for he never was known to have been connected either with Powuſſen or Guſho. He told me after, under the ſeal of ſecrecy, that Ras Michael had halted two days at Derdera; that, upon a meſſage he had received from Begemder, he had broke out into violent paſſions againſt Guſho and Powuſſen, calling them liars and traitors, in the openeſt manner; that a council had been held at Derdera, in preſence of the king, where it was in deliberation whether the army ſhould not turn ſhort into Begemder, to force that province to join them; but that it was carried, for the ſake of the Agows, to ſend Powuſſen a ſummons to join him for the laſt time: that, in the mean while, they ſhould march ſtraight with the greateſt diligence to meet Faſil, and give him battle, then return, and reduce to proper ſubordination both Begemder and Amhara.

This was the very worſt news I could poſſibly receive according to the reſolutions that I had then taken, for I was within about fourteen miles of the great cataract, and it was probable I never again ſhould be ſo near, were it even always acceſſible; to paſs, therefore, without ſeeing it, was worſe, in my own thoughts, than any danger that could threaten me.

Negade Ras Mahomet was a ſober plain man, of excellent underſtanding, and univerſal good character for truth and integrity; and, as ſuch, very much in the favour both of the King and Ras Michael. I therefore opened my intentions to him without reſerve, deſiring his advice how to manage this excurſion to the cataract. "Unleſs you had told me you was reſolved, ſays he, with a grave air, though full of openneſs and candour, I would, in the firſt place, have adviſed you not to think of ſuch an undertaking; theſe are unſettled times; all the country is buſhy, wild, and uninhabited, quite to Alata; and though Mahomet, the Shum, is a good man, my friend and relation, and the king repoſes truſt in him, as he does in me, yet Alata itſelf is at any time but a bad, ſtraggling place, there are now many ſtrangers, and wild people there, whom Mahomet has brought to his aſſiſtance, ſince Guebra Mehedin made the attack upon him. If, then, any thing was to befal you, what ſhould I anſwer to the king and the Iteghè? it would be ſaid, the Turk has betrayed him; though, God knows, I was never capable of betraying your dog, and rather would be poor all my life, than the richeſt man of the province by doing the like wrong, even if the bad action was never to be revealed, or known, unleſs to my own heart.

"Mahomet, ſaid I, you need not dwell on theſe profeſſions; I have lived twelve years with people of your religion, my life always in their power, and I am now in your houſe, in preference to being in a tent out of doors with Netcho and his Chriſtians. I do not aſk you whether I am to go or not, for that is reſolved on; and, tho' you are a Mahometan, and I a Chriſtian, no religion teaches a man to do evil. We both agree in this, that God, who has protected me thus far, is capable to protect me likewiſe at the cataract, and farther, if he has not determined otherwiſe, for my good; I only aſk you as a man who knows the country, to give me your beſt advice, how I may ſatisfy my curioſity in this point, with as little danger, and as much expedition as poſſible, leaving the reſt to heaven."—" Well, ſays he, I ſhall do ſo. I think, likewiſe, for your comfort, that, barring unforeſeen accidents, you may do it at this time, without great danger. Guebra Mehedin will not come between this town and Alata, becauſe we are all one people, and the killing two men, and wounding Mahomet's ſon, makes him a *dimmenia**. At Alata he knows the Shum is ready to receive him as he deſerves, and he is himſelf afraid of Kaſmati Ayabdar, with whom he is as deep in guilt as with us, and here he well knows he dare not venture for many reaſons." " Ayabdar, ſaid I, paſſed the Karoota three days ago." " Well, well, replied Mahomet, ſo much the better. Ayabdar has the leproſy, and goes every year once, ſometimes twice, to the hot wells at Lebec; they muſt paſs near one another, and that is the reaſon Guebra Mehedin has aſſembled all theſe banditti of horſe about him. He is a beggar, and a ſpendthrift; a fortnight ago he ſent to me to borrow twenty ounces of gold. You may be ſure I did not lend it him; he is too much in my debt already; and I hope Ras Michael will give you his head in your hand before winter, for the ſhameful action he has been guilty of to you and yours this day.

" WOODAGE ASAHEL, ſaid I, what ſay you of him?"— " Why, you know, replied Mahomet, nobody can inform you about his motions, as he is perpetually on horſeback, and never reſts night nor day; however, he has no buſineſs on this ſide of the water, the rather that he muſt be ſure Ras Michael, when he paſſed here, took with him all the

king's

---

* Guilty of our blood, and ſubject to the laws of retaliation.

king's money that I had in my hands. When day-light is fairly come, for we do not know the changes a night may produce in this country, take half a dozen of your ſervants; I will ſend with you my ſon and four of my ſervants; you will call at Alata, go down and ſee the cataract, but do not ſtay, return immediately, and, *Ullah Kerim*, God is merciful."

I THANKED my kind landlord, and let him go; but recollecting, called him again, and aſked, "What ſhall I do with Netcho? how ſhall I rejoin him? my company is too ſmall to paſs Maitſha without him."—"Sleep in peace, ſays he, I will provide for that. I tell you in confidence, the king's money is in my hands, and was not ready when the Ras paſſed; my ſon is but juſt arrived with the laſt of it this evening, tired to death; I ſend the money by Netcho, and my ſon too, with forty ſtout fellows well armed, who will die in your ſervice, and not run away like thoſe vagabond Chriſtians, in whom you muſt place no confidence if danger preſents itſelf, but immediately throw yourſelf among the Mahometans. Beſides, there are about fifty ſoldiers, moſt of them from Tigré, Michael's men, that have been loitering here theſe two days. It was one of theſe that fired the gun juſt before you came, which alarmed Netcho; ſo that, when you are come back in ſafety from the cataract, they ſhall be, by that time, all on their march to the paſſage. My ſon ſhall mount with you; I fear the Nile will be too deep, but when once you are at Tſoomwa, you may ſet your mind at reſt, and bid defiance to Woodage Aſahel, who knows his enemy always before he engages him, and at this time will not venture to interrupt your march."

As I have mentioned the name of this perſon ſo often, it will be neceſſary to take notice, that he was by origin a Galla, but born in Damot, of the clan Elmana, or Denſa, two tribes ſettled there in the time of Yaſous I. that he was the moſt intrepid and active partizan in his time, and had an invincible hatred to Ras Michael, nor was there any love loſt betwixt them. It is impoſſible to conceive with what velocity he moved, ſometimes with 200 horſe, ſometimes with half that number. He was conſtantly falling upon ſome part of Michael's army, whether marching or encamped; the blow once ſtruck, he diſappeared in a minute. When he wanted to attempt ſomething great, he had only to ſummon his friends and acquaintance in the country, and he had then a little army, which diſperſed as ſoon as the buſineſs was done. It was Ras Michael's firſt queſtion to the ſpies; Where was Woodage Aſahel laſt night? a queſtion they very ſeldom could anſwer with certainty. He was in his perſon too tall for a good horſeman, yet he was expert in this qualification by conſtant practice. His face was yellow, as if he had the jaundice, and much pitted with the ſmall-pox; his eyes ſtaring, but fiery; his noſe as it were broken, his mouth large, his chin long and turned up at the end; he ſpoke very faſt, but not much, and had a very ſhy, but ill-deſigning look. In his character, he was avaricious, treacherous, inexorable, and cruel to a proverb; in ſhort, he was allowed to be the moſt mercileſs robber and murderer that age had produced in all Abyſſinia.

Wearied with thinking, and better reconciled to my expedition, I fell into a ſound ſleep. I was awakened by Strates in the morning, (the 21ſt of May) who, from the next room, had heard all the converſation between me and Negadé Ras, and began now to think there was no ſafety but in the camp of the king. I will not repeat his wiſe expoſtulations againſt going to the cataract. We were rather late, and I paid little regard to them. After coffee, I mounted my horſe, with five ſervants on horſeback, all reſolute, active, young fellows, armed with lances in the faſhion of their country. I was joined that moment by a ſon of Mahomet, on a good horſe, armed with a ſhort gun, and piſtols at his belt, with four of his ſervants, Mahometans, ſtout men, each having his gun, and piſtols at his girdle, and a ſword hung over his ſhoulder, mounted upon four good mules, ſwifter and ſtronger than ordinary horſes. We galloped all the way, and were out of ſight in a ſhort time. We then purſued our journey with diligence, but not in a hurry; we went firſt to a hilly and rocky country, full of trees, moſtly of unknown kinds, and all of the greateſt beauty poſſible, having flowers of a hundred different colours and forms upon them, many of the trees were loaded with fruit, and many with both fruit and flowers. I was truly ſorry to be obliged to paſs them without more diſtinct notice; but we had no time, as the diſtance to the cataract was not abſolutely certain, and the cataract then was our only object.

After paſſing the plain, we came to a briſk ſtream which riſes in Begemder, paſſes Alata, and throws itſelf into the Nile below the cataract. They told me it was called Mariam Ohha; and, a little farther, on the ſide of a green hill, having the rock appearing in ſome parts of it, ſtands Alata, a conſiderable village, with ſeveral ſmaller, to the ſouth and weſt. Mahomet, our guide, rode immediately up to the houſe where he knew the governor, or Shum, reſided, for fear of alarming him; but we had already been ſeen at a conſiderable diſtance, and Mahomet and his ſervants known. All the people of the village ſurrounded the mules directly, paying each their compliments to the maſter and the ſervants; the ſame was immediately obſerved towards us; and, as I ſaluted the Shum in Arabic, his own language, we ſpeedily became acquainted. Having overſhot the cataract, the noiſe of which we had a long time diſtinctly heard, I reſiſted every entreaty that could be made to me to enter the houſe to refreſh myſelf. I had imbibed part of Strates's fears about the unſettledneſs of the times, and all the kind invitations were to no purpoſe; I was, as it were, forced to comply to refreſh our horſes.

I HAPPENED to be upon a very ſteep part of the hill full of buſhes; and one of the ſervants, dreſſed in the Arabian faſhion, in a burnooſe, and turban ſtriped white and green, led my horſe, for fear of his ſlipping, till it got into the path leading to the Shum's door. I heard the fellow exclaiming in Arabic, as he led the horſe, "Good Lord! to ſee you here! Good God! to ſee you here!"—"I aſked him who he was ſpeaking of, and what reaſon he had to wonder to ſee me there."—"What! do you not know me!" "I ſaid I did not."—"Why, replied he, I was ſeveral times with you at Jidda. I ſaw you often with Capt. Price and Capt. Scott, with the Moor Yaſine, and Mahomet Gibberti. I was the man that brought your letters from Metical Aga at Mecca, and was to come over with you to Maſuah, if you had gone directly there, and had not proceeded to Yemen or Arabia Felix. I was on board the Lion, with the Indian nokeda (ſo they call the captain of a country ſhip) when your little veſſel, all covered with ſail, paſſed with ſuch briſkneſs through the Engliſh ſhips, which all fired their cannon; and everybody ſaid, there is a poor man making great haſte to be aſſaſſinated among thoſe wild people in Habeſh; and ſo we all thought. He concluded, Drink! no force! Engliſhman! very good! G--d damn, drink!" We had juſt arrived, while my friend was uttering theſe exclamations, at the place where the Shum and the reſt were ſtanding. The man continued repeating the ſame words, crying as loud as he could, with an air of triumph, while I was reflecting how ſhameful it was for us to make theſe profligate expreſſions by frequent repetition, ſo eaſily acquired by ſtrangers that knew nothing elſe of our language.

The Shum, and all about him, were in equal aſtoniſhment at ſeeing the man, to all appearance, in a paſſion, bawling out words they did not underſtand; but he, holding a horn in his hand, began louder than before, drink! very good! Engliſhman! ſhaking the horn in the Shum his maſter's face. Mahomet of Alata was a very grave, compoſed man; "I do declare, ſays he, Ali is become mad: Does any-body know what he ſays or means?"—"That I do, ſaid I, and will tell you by-and-bye; he is an old acquaintance of mine, and is ſpeaking Engliſh; let us make a haſty meal, however, with any thing you have to give us."

Our horſes were immediately fed; bread, honey, and butter ſerved: Ali had no occaſion to cry, drink; it went about plentifully, and I would ſtay no longer, but mounted my horſe, thinking every minute that I tarried might be better ſpent at the cataract. The firſt thing they carried us to was the bridge, which conſiſts of one arch of about twenty-five feet broad, the extremities of which were ſtrongly let into, and reſted on the ſolid rock on both ſides; but fragments of the parapets remained, and the bridge itſelf ſeemed to bear the appearance of frequent repairs, and many attempts to ruin it; otherwiſe, in its conſtruction, it was exceedingly commodious. The Nile here is confined between two rocks, and runs in a deep trough, with great roaring and impetuous velocity. We were told no crocodiles were ever ſeen ſo high, and were obliged to remount the ſtream above half a mile before we came to the cataract, through trees and buſhes of the ſame beautiful and delightful appearance with thoſe we had ſeen near Dara.

The cataract itſelf was the moſt magnificent ſight that ever I beheld. The height has been rather exaggerated. The miſſionaries ſay the fall is about ſixteen ells, or fifty feet. The meaſuring is, indeed, very difficult, but, by the poſition of long ſticks, and poles of different lengths, at different heights of the rock, from the water's edge, I may venture to ſay that it is nearer forty feet than any other meaſure. The river had been conſiderably increaſed by rains, and fell in one ſheet of water, without any interval, above half an Engliſh mile in breadth, with a force and noiſe that was truly terrible, and which ſtunned and made me, for a time, perfectly dizzy. A thick fume, or haze, covered the fall all round, and hung over the courſe of the ſtream both above and below, marking its track, though the water was not ſeen. The river, though ſwelled with rain, preſerved its natural clearneſs, and fell, as far as I could diſcern, into a deep pool, or baſon, in the ſolid rock, which was full, and in twenty different eddies to the very foot of the precipice, the ſtream, when it fell, ſeeming part of it to run back with great fury upon the rock, as well as forward in the line of its courſe, raiſing a wave, or violent ebullition, by chaffing againſt each other.

Jerome Lobo pretends, that he has ſat under the curve, or arch, made by the projectile force of the water ruſhing over the precipice. He ſays he ſat calmly at the foot of it, and looking through the curve of the ſtream, as it was falling, ſaw a number of rainbows of inconceivable beauty in this extraordinary priſm. This however I, without heſitation, aver to be a downright falſehood. A deep pool of water, as I mentioned, reaches to the very foot of the rock, and is in perpetual agitation. Now, allowing that there was a ſeat, or bench, which there is not, in the middle of the pool, I do believe it abſolutely impoſſible, by any exertion of human ſtrength, to have arrived at it. Although a very robuſt man, in the prime and vigour of life, and a hardy, practiſed, indefatigable ſwimmer, I am perfectly confident I could not have got to that ſeat from the ſhore through the quieteſt part of that baſon. And, ſuppoſing the friar placed in his imaginary ſeat under the curve of that immenſe arch of water, he muſt have had a portion of firmneſs, more than falls to the ſhare of ordinary men, and which is not likely to be acquired in a monaſtic life, to philoſophiſe upon optics in ſuch a ſituation, where every thing would ſeem to his dazzled eyes to be in motion, and the ſtream, in a noiſe like the loudeſt thunder, to make the ſolid rock (at leaſt as to ſenſe) ſhake to its very foundation, and threaten to tear every nerve to pieces, and to deprive one of other ſenſes beſides that of hearing. It was a moſt magnificent ſight, that ages, added to the greateſt length of human life, would not deface or eradicate from my memory; it ſtruck me with a kind of ſtupor, and a total oblivion of where I was, and of every other ſublunary concern. It was one of the moſt magnificent, ſtupendous ſights in the creation, though degraded and vilified by the lies of a groveling, fanatic peaſant.

I WAS awakened from one of the moſt profound reveries that ever I fell into, by Mahomet, and by my friend *Drink*, who now put to me a thouſand impertinent queſtions. It was after this I meaſured the fall, and believe, within a few feet, it was the height I have mentioned; but I confeſs I could at no time in my life leſs promiſe upon preciſion; my reflection was ſuſpended, or ſubdued, and while in ſight of the fall I think I was under a temporary alienation of mind; it ſeemed to me as if one element had broke looſe from, and become ſuperior to all laws of ſubordination; that the fountains of the great deep were extraordinarily opened, and the deſtruction of a world was again begun by the agency of water.

IT was now half an hour paſt one o'clock, the weather perfectly good; it had rained very little that day, but threatened a ſhowery evening; I peremptorily refuſed returning back to Alata, which our landlord importuned us to. He gave us a reaſon that he thought would have weight with us, that he, too, had his meery, or money, to ſend to the king, which would be ready the next morning as early as we pleaſed. The mention of to-morrow morning brought all my engagements and their conſequences into my mind, and made me give a flat refuſal, with ſome degree of peeviſhneſs and ill-humour. I had ſoon after found, that he had otherwiſe made up this affair with Mahomet our guide; but being reſolute, and, a moment after, taking leave of our kind Shum, we were joined by Seide his eldeſt ſon, and our *Engliſh friend Drink*, each upon a mule, with two ſervants on foot, his father, as he ſaid, being unwilling to ſpare more people, as the whole inhabitants of Alata, their neighbours and friends, intended ſoon to ſurpriſe Guebra Mehedin, if a feaſible opportunity offered.

THOUGH we went briſkly, it was paſt five before we arrived at Dara. Netcho had not ſtirred, and had procured another cow from Mahomet, of which all the ſtrangers, and ſoldiers who remained, partook. Mahomet, I believe, out of kindneſs to me, had convinced them of the neceſſity of taking along with them the Shum of Alata's money; and Netcho well knew that thoſe who brought any part of the revenue to Ras Michael were always received kindly; and he was not intereſted enough in the cauſe to make more haſte than neceſſary to join the king.

STRATES was completely cloathed, and received his ſaſh upon my arrival. He feigned to be wonderfully hurt at my having left him behind in my excurſion to the cataract. At ſupper I began to queſtion him, for the firſt time, what had happened to him with Guebra Mehedin. "Sure, Strates, ſaid I, you two were once friends; I have dined with you together many a time at Ayto Engedan's, and often ſeen you with him in Gondar."—"Gondar! ſays he, I have known him theſe fourteen years, when he was a child in his father Baſha Euſebius's houſe; he was always playing amongſt us at his uncle Kaſmati Eſhté's; he was juſt one of us; nay, he is not now twenty-ſix.

STRATES proceeded—"We were croſſing the plain below Dara, and not being inclined to go into the town without you, we made to a large daroo-tree, and ſat down to reſt ourſelves till you ſhould come up. As the ground was ſomewhat elevated, we ſaw ſeveral horſes in the bed of a torrent where there was no water running, and, when theſe were pulled up the bank, their maſters got immediately upon them. I conceived the one with the red ſaſh upon his head was Guebra Mehedin, and preſently eight or ten naked people, armed with lances and ſhields, came out of the hole neareſt me. I was ſurpriſed, and thought they might be robbers, and, kneeling down upon one knee, I preſented the large blunderbuſs at them. On this they all ran back to their hole, and fell flat on their faces; and they did well; I ſhould have given them a confounded peppering."—"Certainly, ſaid I, there is little doubt of that."—"You may laugh, continued Strates, but the firſt thing I ſaw near me was Confu and Guebra Mehedin, the one with a red, the other a kind of white fillet tied round his forehead. O ho! friend, ſays Guebra Mehedin, where are you going? and held out his hand to me as kindly, familiarly, and chearfully as poſſible. I immediately laid down my blunderbuſs, and went to kiſs his hand. You know they are the good old queen's nephews; and I thought if their houſe was near we ſhould have good entertainment, and ſome merriment that night. I then ſaw one of their ſervants lift the blunderbuſs from the ground, but apparently with fear, and the reſt took poſſeſſion of the mules and baggage. I began to aſk Guebra Mehedin what this meant? and ſaid accidentally, *ente you!* inſtead of ſpeaking it *entow*, as you know they pronounce it to great people. Without further provocation he gave me a laſh with his whip acroſs the eyes, another behind took hold of your ſword that was ſlung upon my ſhoulders, and would have ſtrangled me with the cord if I had not fallen backwards; they all began then to ſtrip me. I was naked in a minute as I was the hour I was born, having only this night-cap; when one of them, a tall black fellow, drew a crooked knife, and propoſed to pay me a compliment that has made me ſhudder every time I have ſince thought of it. I don't know what would have been the end of it, if Confu had not ſaid, Poh! he is a *white* man, and not worth the *ſcarifying*: Let us ſeek his maſter, ſays Guebra Mehedin, he will by this have paſſed the Gomara; he has always plenty of gold both from the king and Iteghé, and is a real Frank, on which account it would be a ſin to ſpare him. On this away they went ſkirmiſhing about the plain. Horſemen came to join them from all parts, and every one that paſſed me gave me a blow of ſome kind or other. None of them hurt me very much, but, no matter; I may have my turn: we ſhall ſee what figure he will make before the Iteghé ſome of theſe days, or, what is better, before Ras Michael."

"THAT you ſhall never ſee, ſays Negadé Ras Mahomet, who entered the room in the inſtant, for there is a man now without who informs us that Guebra Mehedin is either dead or juſt a-dying. A ſhot fired at him, by one of you at the Gomara, cut off part of his cheek-bone; the next morning he heard that Kaſmati Ayabdar was going to the hot waters at Lebec with ſervants only, and the devil to whom he belonged would not quit him; he would perſiſt, ill as he was, to attack Ayabdar, who having, unknown to him, brought a number of ſtout fellows along with him, without difficulty cut his ſervants to pieces. In the fray, Tecla Georgis, a ſervant who takes care of Ayabdar's horſe, coming up with Guebra Mehedin himſelf, hurt as he was, ſtruck him over the ſkull with a large crooked knife like a hatchet, and left him mortally wounded on the field, whence he was carried to a church, where he is now lying a miſerable ſpectacle, and can never recover." Strates could hold no longer. He got up and danced as if he had been frantic, ſometimes ſinging Greek ſongs, at another time pronouncing ten thouſand curſes, which he wiſhed might overtake him in the other world. For my part, I felt very differently, for I had much rather, conſidering whoſe nephew he was, that he ſhould have lived, than to have it ſaid that he received his firſt wound, not a mortal one, but intended as ſuch, from my hand.

CHAP. V.

Paſs the Nile and encamp at Tſoomwa—Arrive at Derdera—Alarm on approaching the Army—Join the King at Karcagna.

ON the 22d of May we were all equally deſirous to reſume our journey. We ſet out accordingly at ſix o'clock in the morning, aſcending ſome hills covered, as the former ones, with trees and ſhrubs, utterly unknown to me, but of inexpreſſible beauty, and many of extraordinary fragrance. We continued aſcending about three miles, till we came to the top of the ridge within ſight of the lake. As we roſe, the hills became more bare and leſs beautiful. We afterwards deſcended towards the paſſage, partly over ſteep banks which had been covered with buſhes, all trodden down by the army, and which had made the acceſs to the river exceedingly ſlippery. Here we ſaw the uſe of Mahomet's ſervants, three of whom, each with a lance in one hand, holding that of his companion in the other, waded acroſs the violent ſtream, ſounding with the end of their lances every ſtep they took. The river was very deep, the current, I ſuppoſe, fifty yards broader than it was at the cataract; but the banks were, for a great way on each ſide, almoſt perfectly level, though much obſtructed with black ſtones. In the middle it was very deep, and the ſtream ſmooth, ſo that it was apparent our horſes muſt ſwim. For my part I did not like the ſmooth ſtones at the bottom, as a fall there would have been irrecoverable; and my horſe was ſhod with iron, which is not uſual in Abyſſinia. I therefore reſolved to ſwim where I could not wade, and, wrapping my cloaths in a bundle, I gave them to a ſervant, who carried them over on his head. I then waded in, and found the water unexpectedly cold. Mahomet rode on a mule by my ſide, ſometimes ſwimming, ſometimes walking. I attempted to ſound up towards the lake, and found it deeper there. I returned, therefore, being unwilling to try experiments, and, committing myſelf to the ſtream, ſwam to the other ſide, much comforted by the aſſurance that no crocodile paſſed the cataract.

The beaſts having got over, the men followed much quicker; many women, going to join the army, ſwam over, holding the tails of the horſes, and we were all on the other ſide before twelve o'clock, the beaſts a good deal tired with the paſſage, the ſteepneſs of the acceſs to it, and the ſtill greater depth on the other ſide. For my part, I thought we could not have gone on to Tſoomwa, but it was carried againſt me. Tſoomwa is about twelve miles diſtant; and I ſuppoſe it was not much paſt three o'clock when we arrived there, which was very fortunate, as we had ſcarcely pitched our tents before a moſt terrible ſtorm of rain, wind, and thunder overtook us. My tent was happily placed in one reſpect, being on a flat on the lee-ſide of a hill, and ſheltered from the ſtorm; but, on the other hand, the water ran ſo plentifully from above as quite to overflow it on the inſide till a trench was dug to carry it off.

Ras Michael had burnt nothing at Tſoomwa, though there was a houſe of Powuſſen's in the place, built by his father. But that diſſembler, to prevent the worſt, and carry on the farce to the uttermoſt, had ſent many bags of flour for the uſe of the King and the Ras, which were to be diſtributed to the army in caſe they wanted.

From the paſſage to Tſoomwa, all the country was forſaken; the houſes uninhabited, the graſs trodden down, and the fields without cattle. Every thing that had life and ſtrength fled before that terrible leader, and his no leſs terrible army; a profound ſilence was in the fields around us, but no marks as yet of deſolation. We kept ſtrict watch in this ſolitude all that night. I took my turn till twelve, as I was the leaſt fatigued of any. Netcho had picquets about a quarter of a mile on every ſide of us, with fire-arms, to give the alarm.

On the 23d, about three in the morning, a gun was heard on the ſide towards the paſſage. This did not much alarm us, though we all turned out. In a few minutes came Ayto Adigo, (not the Shum of Karoota, already mentioned, who left us at the Gomara,) but a young nobleman of Begemder of great hopes, one of the gentlemen of the king's bedchamber, and conſequently my colleague. He intended to have brought four horſes to the king, one of which he had drowned, or rather, as I afterwards underſtood, throttled in paſſing the Nile at the mouth of the lake; and two men, the king's ſervants, had periſhed there likewiſe. He came in great hurry, full of the news from Begemder, and of the particulars of the conſpiracy, ſuch as have been already ſtated. With Ayto Adigo came the king's cook, Sebaſtos, an old Greek, near ſeventy, who had fallen ſick with fatigue. After having ſatisfied his inquiries, and given him what refreſhment we could ſpare, he left Sebaſtos with us, and purſued his journey to the camp.

On the 24th, at our ordinary time, when the ſun began to be hot, we continued our route due ſouth, through a very plain, flat country, which, by the conſtant rains that now fell, began to ſtand in large pools, and threatened to turn all into a lake. We had hitherto loſt none of our beaſts of carriage, but we now were ſo impeded by ſtreams, brooks, and quagmires, that we deſpaired of ever bringing one of them to join the camp. The horſes, and beaſts of burthen that carried the baggage of the army, and which had paſſed before us, had ſpoiled every ford, and we ſaw to-day a number of dead mules lying about the fields, the houſes all reduced to ruins, and ſmoking like ſo many kilns; even the graſs, or wild oats, which were grown very high, were burnt in large plots of a hundred acres together; every thing bore the marks that Ras Michael was gone before, whilſt not a living creature appeared in thoſe extenſive, fruitful, and once well-inhabited plains. An awful ſilence reigned everywhere around, interrupted only at times by thunder, now become daily, and the rolling of torrents produced by local ſhowers in the hills, which ceaſed with the rain, and were but the children of an hour. Amidſt this univerſal ſilence that prevailed all over this ſcene of extenſive deſolation, I could not

help

help remembering how finely Mr Gray paints the paſſage of ſuch an army, under a leader like Ras Michael—

> Confuſion in his van with flight combin'd,
> And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

At Derdera we ſaw the church of St Michael, the only building which, in favour of his own name, the Ras had ſpared. It ſerved us then for a very convenient lodging, as much rain had fallen in the night, and the prieſts had all fled or been murdered. We had this evening, when it was clear, ſeen the mountain of Samſeen. Our next ſtage from Derdera was Karcagna, a ſmall village near the banks of the Jemma, about two miles from Samſeen. We knew the king had reſolved to burn it, and we expected to have ſeen the clouds of ſmoke ariſing from its ruins, but all was perfectly cool and clear, and this very much ſurpriſed us, conſidering the time he had to do this, and the great punctuality and expedition with which his army uſed to execute orders of this kind. As we advanced, we had ſeen a great number of dead mules and horſes, and the hyænas ſo bold as only to leave the carcaſe for a moment, and ſnarl as if they had regretted at ſeeing any of us paſs alive.

Since paſſing the Nile I found myſelf more than ordinarily depreſſed; my ſpirits were ſunk almoſt to a degree of deſpondency, and yet nothing had happened ſince that period more than was expected before. This diſagreeable ſituation of mind continued at night while I was in bed. The raſhneſs and imprudence with which I had engaged myſelf in ſo many dangers without any neceſſity for ſo doing; the little proſpect of my being ever able to extricate myſelf out of them, or, even if I loſt my life, of the account being conveyed to my friends at home; the great and unreaſonable preſumption which had led me to think that, after every one that had attempted this voyage had miſcarried in it, I was the only perſon that was to ſucceed; all theſe reflections upon my mind, when relaxed, dozing, and half oppreſſed with ſleep, filled my imagination with what I have heard other people call the *horrors*, the moſt diſagreeable ſenſation I ever was conſcious of, and which I then felt for the firſt time. Impatient of ſuffering any longer, I leaped out of bed, and went to the door of the tent, where the outward air perfectly awakened me, and reſtored my ſtrength and courage. All was ſtill, and at a diſtance I ſaw ſeveral bright fires, but lower down, and more to the right than I expected, which made me think I was miſtaken in the ſituation of Karcagna. It was then near four in the morning of the 25th. I called up my companions, happily buried in deep ſleep, as I was deſirous, if poſſible, to join the king that day. We accordingly were three or four miles from Derdera when the ſun roſe; there had been little rain that night, and we found very few torrents on our way; but it was ſlippery, and uneaſy walking, the rich ſoil being trodden into a conſiſtence like paſte.

About ſeven o'clock we entered upon the broad plain of Maitſha, and were faſt leaving the lake. Here the country is, at leaſt a great part of it, in tillage, and had been, in appearance, covered with plentiful crops, but all was cut down by the army for their horſes, or trodden under foot, from careleſſneſs or vengeance, ſo that a green blade could ſcarcely be ſeen. We ſaw a number of people this day, chiefly ſtraggling ſoldiers, who, in parties of threes and fours, had been ſeeking, in all the buſhes and concealed parts of the river, for the miſerable natives, who had hid themſelves thereabouts; in this they had many of them been ſucceſsful. They had ſome of them three, ſome of them four women, boys and girls, who, though Chriſtians like themſelves, they nevertheleſs were carrying away into ſlavery to ſell them to the Turks for a very ſmall price.

A LITTLE before nine we heard a gun fired that gave us ſome joy, as the army ſeemed not to be far off; a few minutes after, we heard ſeveral dropping ſhots, and, in leſs than a quarter of an hour's time, a general firing began from right to left, which ceaſed for an inſtant, and then was heard again as ſmart as ever, about the occaſion of which we were divided in opinion.

NETCHO was ſatisfied that Woodage Aſahel, from Samſeen, had fallen upon Ras Michael at Karcagna, to prevent his burning it, and that Faſil had ſtrongly reinforced him that he might be able to retard the army's march. On the other hand, having been informed by Ayto Adigo, that news were come to Gondar that Faſil had left Buré, and that Derdera was the place agreed on by Guſho and Powuſſen to ſhut up Michael on the rear, I thought that it was Faſil, to make good his part of his promiſe, who had croſſed the Nile at Goutto, and attacked Ras Michael before he ſuffered him to burn Samſeen. Indeed we all agreed that both opinions were likely to be true, and that Faſil and Woodage Aſahel would both attack the king at the ſame time. The firing continued much in the ſame way, rather ſlacker, but apparently advancing nearer us; a ſure ſign that our army was beaten and retreating. We, therefore, made ourſelves ready, and mounted on horſeback, that we might join them. Yet it was a thing appeared to us ſcarcely poſſible, that Faſil ſhould beat Ras Michael ſo eaſily, and with ſo ſhort a reſiſtance.

We had not gone far in the plain before we had a ſight of the enemy, to our very great ſurpriſe and no ſmall comfort. A multitude of deer, buffaloes, boars, and various other wild beaſts, had been alarmed by the noiſe and daily advancing of the army, and gradually driven before them. The country was all overgrown with wild oats, a great many of the villages having been burnt the year before the inhabitants had abandoned them; in this ſhelter the wild beaſts had taken up their abodes in very great numbers. When the army pointed towards Karcagna to the left, the ſilence and ſolitude on the oppoſite ſide made them turn to the right to where the Nile makes a ſemi-circle, the Jemma being behind them, and much overflowed. When the army, therefore, inſtead of marching ſouth and by eaſt towards Samſeen, had turned their courſe north-weſt, their faces towards Gondar, they had fallen in with theſe innumerable herds of deer and other beaſts, who, confined between the Nile, the Jemma, and the lake, had no way to return but that by which they had come. Theſe animals, finding men in every direction in which they attempted to paſs, became deſperate with fear, and, not knowing what courſe to take, fell a prey to the troops. The ſoldiers, happy in an occaſion of procuring animal food, preſently fell to firing wherever the beaſts appeared; every loaded gun was diſcharged upon them, and this continued for very near an hour. A numerous flock of the largeſt deer met us juſt in the face, and ſeemed ſo deſperate, that they had every appearance of running us down; and part of them forced themſelves through, regardleſs of us all, whilſt others turned ſouth to eſcape acroſs the plain.

The king and Ras Michael were in the moſt violent agitation of mind: though the cauſe was before their eyes, yet the word went about that Woodage Aſahel had attacked the army; and this occaſioned a great panic and diſorder, for everybody was convinced with reaſon that he was not far off. The firing, however, continued, the balls flew about in every direction, ſome few were killed, and many people and horſes were hurt; ſtill they fired, and Ras Michael, at the door of his tent, crying, threatening, and tearing his grey locks, found, for a few minutes, the army was not under his command. At this inſtant, Kaſmati Netcho, whoſe Fit-Auraris had fallen back on his front, ordered his kettle-drums, to be beat before he arrived in the king's preſence; and this being heard, without it being known generally who we were, occaſioned another panic; great part of the army believed that Powuſſen and Guſho were now at hand to keep their appointment with Faſil, and that Netcho and I were his Fit-Auraris. The king ordered his tent to be pitched, his ſtandard to be ſet up, his drums to beat, (the ſignal for encamping) and the firing immediately ceaſed. But it was a long while before all the army could believe that Woodage Aſahel had not been engaged with ſome part of it that day. Happily, if near at hand, he did not lay hold of this favourable opportunity; for I am convinced, if, juſt before our arrival, he had attacked Michael on the Samſeen ſide, with 500 horſe, our whole army had fled without reſiſtance, and diſperſed all over the country.

Here I left Kaſmati Netcho, and was making my way towards the king's tent, when I was met by a ſervant of confidence of Kefla Yaſous, who had that day commanded the rear in the retreat, a very experienced officer, brave even to a fault, but full of mildneſs and humanity, and the moſt ſenſible and affable man in the army. He ſent to deſire that I would come to him alone, or that I would ſend one of the Greeks that followed me. I promiſed to do ſo, after having anſwered moſt of the queſtions that he bade his ſervant aſk of me. After this I ſearched for Strates and Sebaſtos, who had been ſick upon the road.

I soon came up with them, and was more ſurpriſed than I had been for ſeveral days, to ſee them both lie extended on the ground; Strates bleeding at a large wound in his forehead, ſpeaking Greek to himſelf, and crying out his leg was broken, whilſt he preſſed it with both his hands below the knee, ſeemingly regardleſs of the gaſh in his head, which appeared to me a very ugly one, ſo that I, of courſe, thought his leg was ſtill worſe. Sebaſtos was lying ſtretched along the ground, ſcarcely ſaying any thing, but ſighing loudly. Upon my aſking him whether his arm was broken? he anſwered feebly, that he was a dying man, and that his legs, his arms, and his ribs were broken to pieces. I could not for my life conceive how this calamity had happened ſo ſuddenly, for I had not been half an hour abſent talking to Kefla Yaſous's ſervant; and, what ſeemed to me ſtill ſtranger, every body around them were burſting out into fits of laughter.

Ali Mahomet's ſervant, who was the only perſon that I ſaw concerned, upon my aſking, told me that it was all owing to prince George, who had frightened their mules. I have already hinted that this prince was fond of horſemanſhip; and rode with ſaddle, bridle, and ſtirrups, like an Arab; and, though young, was become an excellent horſeman, ſuperior to any in Abyſſinia. The manner that two Arabs ſalute one another, when they meet, is, the perſon inferior in rank, or age, preſents his gun at the other, about 500 yards diſtance, charged with powder only; he then, keeping his gun always preſented, gallops theſe 500 yards as faſt as he can, and, being arrived cloſe, lowers the muzzle of his gun, and pours the exploſion juſt under the other's ſtirrups, or horſe's belly. This they do, ſometimes twenty at a time, and you would often think it was impoſſible ſomebody ſhould eſcape being bruiſed or burnt.

The prince had learned this exerciſe from me, and was very perfect at the performance of it. We had procured him a ſhort gun, with a lock and flint inſtead of a match, and he ſhot not only juſtly, but gracefully on horſeback. He had been out after the deer all the morning; and hearing that I was arrived, and ſeeing the two Greeks riding on their mules, he came galloping furiouſly with his gun preſented, and, not ſeeing me, he fired a ſhot under the belly of Strates's mule, upon the ground, and wheeling as quick as lightning to the left, regardleſs of the miſchief he had occaſioned, was out of ſight in a moment, before he knew the conſequences.

Never was compliment worſe timed or reliſhed. Strates had two panniers upon his mule, containing two great earthen jars of hydromel for the king; Sebaſtos had alſo ſome jars and pots, and three or four dozen of drinking-glaſſes, likewiſe for the king; each of the mules was covered with a carpet, and alſo the panniers; and upon the pack-ſaddle, between theſe panniers, did Strates and Sebaſtos ride. The mules as well as the loading belonged to the king, and they only were permitted to ride them becauſe they were ſick. Strates went firſt, and, to ſave trouble, the halter of Sebaſtos's mule was tied to Strates's ſaddle, ſo the mules were faſtened to and followed one another. Upon firing the gun ſo near it, Strates's mule, not uſed to compliments of this kind, ſtarted, and threw him to the ground; it then trampled upon him, began to run off, and wound the halter around Sebaſtos behind, who fell to the ground likewiſe amongſt ſome ſtones. Both the mules then began kicking at each other, till they had thrown off the panniers and pack-ſaddles, and broke every thing that was brittle in them. The miſchief did not end here, for, in ſtruggling to get looſe, they fell foul of the mule of old Azage Tecla Haimanout, one of the king's criminal judges, a very old, feeble man, and threw him upon the ground, and broke his foot, ſo that he could not walk alone for ſeveral months afterwards. As ſoon as I had pitched a tent for the wounded, and likewiſe dreſſed Tecla Haimanout's foot, I went to Keſla Yaſous, while the two Mahomets proceeded to the Ras with their money.

The moment I came into the tent, Keſla Yaſous roſe up and embraced me. He was ſitting alone, but with rather a chearful than a dejected countenance; he told me they were all in great concern, till Ayto Adigo's arrival, at a report which came from Gondar that we had fought with Guebra Mehedin, and had all been ſlain. I informed him every thing I knew, or had heard, but he had better intelligence than I in every article but this laſt, freſh news having arrived the night before by way of Delakus. He ſaid, the rebellion of Guſho and Powuſſen was certain; that the King and Ras knew every circumſtance of it, and that Court-ohha was the place appointed with Faſil to meet and cut them off; he had not heard of Woodage Aſahel's march, but ſeemed to give full credit to it; he ſaid it was certain, likewiſe, that Faſil had advanced towards Maitſha; but where his quarters were he did not know, probably they were not at a great diſtance. He complained violently of his march, and of the number of beaſts which they had loſt; he wiſhed alſo that Faſil would be induced to give battle where they were encamped, as his horſe would probably be of little uſe to him among ſo many torrents and rivers, and muſt ſuffer conſiderably in their advancing hither.

I asked him whither they were now marching? He ſaid, that, as ſoon as the news of the conſpiracy were known, a council was held, where it was the general opinion they ſhould proceed briſkly forward, and attack Faſil alone at Buré, then turn to Gondar to meet the other two; but then they had it upon the very beſt authority that great rain had fallen to the ſouthward; that the rivers, which were ſo frequent in that part of the country, were moſtly impaſſable, ſo there would be great danger in meeting Faſil with an army ſpent and fatigued with the difficulty of the roads. It was, therefore, determined, and the Ras was decidedly of that opinion, that they ſhould keep their army entire for a better day, and immediately croſs the Nile, and march back to Gondar; that they had accordingly wheeled about, and that day was the firſt of their proceeding, which had been interrupted by the accident of the firing. Keſla Yaſous offered me all ſorts of refreſhments, and I dined with him; he ſent alſo great abundance for my ſervants to my tent, leſt I ſhould not have yet got my appointments from the king. I then went directly to my own tent, where I found all that belonged to me had arrived ſafe, under the care of Franciſco; and having now procured clothes, inſtead of thoſe taken from me by Guebra Mehedin, I waited upon the king, and ſtaid a conſiderable time with him, aſking much the ſame queſtions Kefla Yaſous had done. I would have paid my reſpects to the Ras alſo, but miſſed him, for he was at council.

CHAP. VI.

King's Army retreats towards Gondar—Memorable Paſſage of the Nile—Dangerous Situation of the Army—Retreat of Keſla Yaſous—Battle of Limjour—Unexpected Peace with Faſil—Arrival at Gondar.

IT was on the 26th of May, early in the morning, that the army marched towards the Nile. In the afternoon we encamped, between two and three, on the banks of the river Coga, the church Abbo being ſomething more than half a mile to the north-weſt of us.

NEXT morning, the 27th, we left the river Coga, marching down upon the Nile; we paſſed the church of *Mariam-Net*, as they call the church of St Anne. Here the ſuperior, attended by about fifty of his monks, came in proceſſion to welcome Ras Michael; but he, it ſeems, had received ſome intelligence of ill-offices the people of this quarter had done to the Agows by Faſil's direction; he therefore

ordered

ordered the church to be plundered, and took the ſuperior, and two of the leading men of the monks, away with him to Gondar; ſeveral of the others were killed and wounded, without provocation, by the ſoldiers, and the reſt diſperſed through the country.

Prince George had ſent immediately in the morning to put me in mind that I had promiſed, in the king's tent at Lamgué, under Emfras, to ride with him in his party when in Maitſha. He commanded about two hundred and fifty choſen horſe, and kept at about half a mile's diſtance on the right flank of the army. I told the king the prince's deſire; who only anſwered, dryly enough, "Not till we paſs the Nile; we do not yet know the ſtate of this country." Immediately after this, he detached the horſe of Siré and Serawé, and commanded me with his own guards to take poſſeſſion of the ford where the Fit-Auraris had croſſed, and to ſuffer no mule or horſe to paſs till their arrival.

There were two fords propoſed for our paſſage; one oppoſite to the church Boſkon Abbo, between the two rivers Kelti and Arooſſi, (on the weſt of the Nile,) and the Koga and Amlac Ohha from the eaſt; it was ſaid to be deep, but paſſable, though the bottom was of clay, and very ſoft; the other ford propoſed was higher up, at the ſecond cataract of Kerr. It was thought of conſequence to chuſe this ford, as the Kelti, (itſelf a large and deep river) joined by the Branti, which comes from the weſtward of Quaquera, brings, in the rainy ſeaſon, a prodigious acceſſion of water to the Nile; yet, below this, the guides had adviſed the Ras to paſs, and many found it afterwards a ſound bottom, very little deeper, with level ground on both ſides. We arrived about four on the banks of the Nile, and took poſſeſſion in a line of about 600 yards of ground.

From the time we decamped from Coga it poured inceſſantly the moſt continued rain we ever had yet ſeen, violent claps of thunder followed cloſe one upon another, almoſt without interval, accompanied with ſheets of lightning, which ran on the ground like water; the day was more than commonly dark, as in an eclipſe; and every hollow, or foot-path, collected a quantity of rain, which fell into the Nile in torrents. It would have brought into the dulleſt mind Mr Hume's ſtriking lines on my native Carron—

> Red ran the river down, and loud and oft
> The angry ſpirit of the water ſhriek'd.
>
> Douglas.

The Abyſſinian armies paſs the Nile at all ſeaſons. It rolls with it no trees, ſtones, nor impediments; yet the ſight of ſuch a monſtrous maſs of water terrified me, and made me think the idea of croſſing would be laid aſide. It was plain in the face of every one, that they gave themſelves over for loſt; an univerſal dejection had taken place, and it was but too viſible that the army was defeated by the weather, without having ſeen an enemy. The Greeks crowded around me, all forlorn and deſpairing, curſing the hour they had firſt entered that country, and following theſe curſes with fervent prayers, where fear held the place of devotion. A cold and briſk gale now ſprung up at N. W. with a clear ſun; and ſoon after four, when the army arrived on the banks of the Nile, theſe temporary torrents were all ſubſided, the ſun was hot, and the ground again beginning to become dry.

Netcho, Ras Michael's Fit-Auraris, with about 400 men, had paſſed in the morning, and taken his ſtation above us in little huts like bee-hives, which the ſoldiers, who carry no tents, make very ſpeedily and artificially for themſelves, of the long, wild oats, each ſtraw of which is at leaſt eight feet long, and near as thick as an ordinary man's little finger. He had ſent back word to the king, that his men had paſſed ſwimming, and with very great difficulty; that he doubted whether the horſes, or loaded mules, could croſs at any rate; but, if it was reſolved to make the trial, they ſhould do it immediately, without ſtaying till the increaſe of the river. He ſaid both banks were compoſed of black earth, ſlippery and miry, which would become more ſo when horſes had puddled it; he adviſed, above all, the turning to the right immediately after coming aſhore, in the direction in which he had fixed poles, as the earth there was hard and firm, beſides having the advantage of ſome round ſtones which hindered the beaſts from ſlipping or ſinking. Inſtead, therefore, of reſting there that night, it was reſolved that the horſe ſhould croſs immediately.

The firſt who paſſed was a young man, a relation of the king, brother to Ayamico killed at the battle of Banja; he walked in with great caution, marking a track for the king to paſs. He had gone upon rather ſolid ground, about twice the length of his horſe, when he plunged out of his depth, and ſwam to the other ſide. The king followed him immediately with a great degree of haſte, Ras Michael calling to him to proceed with caution, but without ſucceſs.

Afterwards

Afterwards came the old Ras on his mule, with ſeveral of his friends ſwimming both with and without their horſes on each ſide of him, in a manner truly wonderful. He ſeemed to have loſt his accuſtomed calmneſs, and appeared a good deal agitated; forbade, upon pain of death, any one to follow him directly, or to ſwim over, as their cuſtom is, holding their mules by the tail. As ſoon as theſe were ſafely aſhore, the king's houſehold and black troops, and I with them, advanced cautiouſly into the river, and ſwam happily over, in a deep ſtream of reddiſh-coloured water, which ran without violence almoſt upon a level.

Each horſeman had a mule in his hand, which ſwam after him, or by his ſide, with his coat of mail and head-piece tied upon it. My horſe was a very ſtrong one, and in good condition, and a ſervant took charge of my mule and coat of mail, ſo that, being unembarraſſed, I had the happineſs to get ſafe and ſoon over, and up the path to the right without great difficulty, ſo had moſt others of the cavalry who ſwam along with us; but the ground now began to be broken on both ſides of the paſſage, and it was almoſt as difficult to get in, as it was to ſcramble up the bank afterwards.

Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando,
Temperet a lachrymis.——

Virg.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the confuſion that followed; night was hard upon us, and, though it increaſed our loſs, it in great meaſure concealed it; a thouſand men had not yet paſſed, though on mules and horſes; many mired in the muddy landing-place, fell back into the ſtream, and were carried away and drowned. Of the horſe belonging to the king's houſehold, one hundred and eighty in number, ſeven only were miſſing; with them Ayto Aylo, vice-chamberlain to the queen, and Tecla Mariam the king's uncle, a great friend of Ras Michael's, both old men.

The ground on the weſt ſide was quite of another conſiſtence than was that upon the eaſt, it was firm, covered with ſhort graſs, and roſe in ſmall hills like the downs in England, all ſloping into little valleys which carried off the water, the declivity being always towards the Nile. There was no baggage (the tent of the Ras and that of the king excepted) which had as yet come over, and theſe were wet, being drenched in the river. The Fit-Auraris had left, ready made, two rafts for Ozoro Eſther, and the other two ladies, with which ſhe might have eaſily been conducted over, and without much danger; but the Ras had made Ozoro Eſther paſs over in the ſame manner he had croſſed himſelf, many ſwimming on each ſide of her mule. She would have fain ſtaid on the eaſt ſide, but it was in vain to remonſtrate. She was with child, and had fainted ſeveral times; but yet nothing could prevail with the Ras to truſt her on the other bank till morning. She croſſed, however, ſafely, though almoſt dead with fright. It was ſaid he had determined to put her to death if ſhe did not paſs, from jealouſy of her falling into the hands of Faſil; but this I will by no means vouch, nor do I believe it. The night was cold and clear, and a ſtrong wind at north-weſt had blown all the afternoon. Guebra Maſcal, and ſeveral of Ras Michael's officers, had purpoſely tarried behind for gathering in the ſtragglers. The river had abated towards mid-night, when, whether from this cauſe, or, as they alledged, that they found a more favourable ford, all the Tigré infantry, and many mules lightly loaded, paſſed with leſs difficulty than any of the reſt had done, and with them ſeveral loads of flour; luckily alſo my two tents and mules, to my great conſolation, came ſafely over when it was near morning. Still the army continued to paſs, and thoſe that could ſwim ſeemed beſt off. I was in the greateſt diſtreſs for the good Ammonios, my lieutenant, who was miſſing, and did not join us till late in the morning, having been all night buſy in ſeeking Ayto Aylo, the queen's chamberlain, and Tecla Mariam, who were his great companions, drowned probably at the firſt attempt to paſs, as they were never after heard of.

The greateſt part of the foot, however, croſſed in the night; and many were of opinion that we had miſtaken the paſſage altogether, by going too high, and being in too great a haſte; the banks, indeed, were ſo ſteep, it was very plain that this could never have been an accuſtomed ford for cavalry. Before day-light the van and the center had all joined the king; the number, I believe, that had periſhed was never diſtinctly known, for thoſe that were miſſing were thought to have remained on the other ſide with Keſla Yaſous, at leaſt for that day. Keſla Yaſous, indeed, with the rear and all the baggage of the army, had remained on the other ſide, and, with very few tents pitched, waited the dawn of the morning.

It happened that the prieſts of the church of Mariam Net, in the confuſion, had been left unheeded, chained arm to arm, in the rear with Keſla Yaſous, and they had began interceding with him to procure their pardon and diſmiſſion. He was a man, as I ſaid, of the greateſt affability and complacency, and heard every one ſpeak with the utmoſt patience. Theſe prieſts, terrified to death leſt Michael ſhould pull their eyes out, or exerciſe ſome of his uſual cruelties upon them, which was certainly his intention by bringing them with him to Gondar, frankly declared to Keſla Yaſous what they apprehended. They ſaid that they had never known a ford there before, though they had lived many years in the neighbourhood, nor had ever heard of one at Kerr, the firſt cataract, which the guides had perſuaded the rather of the two; they did believe, therefore, that Michael's guides had deceived him on purpoſe, and that they intended the ſame thing by him to-morrow, if he attempted to paſs at Kerr. They told him further, that, about three days before Michael had arrived in the neighbourhood of Samſeen, they had heard a nagareet beat regularly every evening at ſun-ſet, behind the high woody hill in front, whereon was the church of Boſkon Abbo; that they had ſeen alſo a man the day before who had left Welleta Yaſous, Faſil's principal officer and confident, at Goutto, waiting the arrival of ſome more troops to paſs the Nile there, whence they doubted not that there was treachery intended.

The ſagacious and prudent Keſla Yaſous weighed every word of this in his mind, and, combining all the circumſtances together, was immediately convinced that there had been a ſnare laid by Faſil for them. Entering further into converſation with the prieſts, and encouraging them with aſſurances of reward inſtead of puniſhment, he inquired if they certainly knew any better ford below. They anſwered ed him they knew of no ford but the common one of Delakus, about eight miles below; that it was true it was not good, and it was deeper than ordinary, as the rainy ſeaſon had begun early, but that it was ſo perfectly fordable that all the country people had gone with aſſes loaded with butter and honey, and other proviſions, for the market of Gondar laſt week; from whence they inferred that he could eaſily ford it, and ſafely, even with loaded mules. They adviſed him farther, as the night was dry, and the rain fell generally in the day, to loſe no time, but to collect his troops, weary as they were, as ſoon as poſſible, and ſend the heavy baggage before; that there was no river or torrent in their way, but Amlac Ohha, which, at that time of night, was at its loweſt, and they might then paſs it at their leiſure, while he covered them with his troops behind; that in ſuch caſe they might all be ſafe over the ford by the time the ſun became to be hot in the morning, about which hour they did not doubt he would be attacked by Welleta Yaſous. They ſaid farther, that, though they could claim little merit, being priſoners, by offering to be his guides, yet he might perhaps find his uſe in the meaſure, and would thereby prove their faith and loyalty to the king.

Although all this bore the greateſt ſhew of probability, and the lives of the informers were in his hands, that cautious general would not undertake a ſtep of ſo much conſequence, as to ſeparate the rear of the army from the king, without further inquiry. There was then in his camp, waiting the event of next day, two of the guides who had brought them to this ford; a third had gone over the river with Ras Michael. There was likewiſe in his camp a ſervant of Nanna Georgis, who had arrived ſome days before with information to Ras Michael. The two guides pretended to be Agows, conſequently friends to the king. He called theſe into his preſence, and ordered them to be put in irons, and then ſent for the ſervant of Nanna Georgis. This man immediately knew the one to be his countryman, but declared the other was a Galla, both of them ſervants of Faſil, and then living in Maitſha.

Kefla Yasous immediately ordered the Kanitz Kitzera (the executioner of the camp) to attend, and having exhorted them to declare the truth for fear of what would ſpeedily follow, and no ſatisfactory anſwer being given, he directed the eyes of the eldeſt, the Galla, to be plucked out; and he continuing ſtill obſtinate, he delivered him to the ſoldiers, who hewed him to pieces with their large knives in preſence of his companion. In the mean time the prieſts had been very earneſt with the young one, the Agow, to confeſs, with better ſucceſs; but this execution, to which he had been witneſs, was more prevailing than all their arguments. Upon promiſe of life, liberty, and reward, he declared that he had left Faſil behind a hill, which he then ſhewed, about three miles diſtant, in front of the king's army, and had gone down to Welleta Yaſous, who was waiting at Goutto ready to paſs the Nile: that they were ſent forward to decoy the king to that paſſage, under the name of a ford, where they expected great part of the army would periſh if they attempted to paſs: that Faſil was to attack ſuch part of the king's army as ſhould have paſſed as ſoon as it appeared upon the heights above the river, but not till, by the firing on the eaſt ſide, he knew that Welleta Yaſous was engaged with the rear, or part of the army, which ſhould ſtill remain on that ſide ſeparated by the river: that they did not imagine Ras Michael could have paſſed that night, but that to-morrow he would certainly be attacked by Faſil, as his companion, who had croſſed with Ras Michael, was to go directly to Faſil and inform him of the ſituation of the King, the Ras, and the army.

Kefla Yasous ſent two of his principal officers, with a diſtinct detail of this whole affair, to the king. It being now dark, they ſwam the river on horſeback, with much more difficulty and danger than we had done, and they found Ras Michael and the king in council, to whom they told their meſſage with every circumſtance, adding, that Kefla Yaſous, as the only way to preſerve the army, quite ſpent with fatigue, and encumbered with ſuch a quantity of baggage, had ſtruck his tent, and would, by that time, be on his march for the ford of Delakus, which he ſhould croſs, and, after leaving a party to guard the baggage and ſick, he ſhould with the freſheſt of his men join the army. The ſpy that had paſſed with Michael and the king was now ſought for, but he had loſt no time, and was gone off to Faſil at Boſkon Abbo. Kefla Yaſous, having ſeen all the baggage on their way before him, did, as his laſt act, perhaps not ſtrictly conſiſtent with juſtice, hang the poor unfortunate informer, the Agow, upon one of the trees at the ford, that Welleta Yaſous, when he paſſed in the morning, might ſee how certainly his ſecret was diſcovered, and that conſequently he was on his guard.

On the 28th he croſſed Amlac Ohha with ſome degree of difficulty, and was obliged to abandon ſeveral baggage-mules. He advanced after this with as great diligence as poſſible to Delakus, and found the ford, though deep, much better than he expected. He had pitched his tent on the high road to Gondar, before Welleta Yaſous knew he was decamped, and of this paſſage he immediately adviſed Michael refreſhing his troops for any emergency.

About two in the afternoon Welleta Yaſous appeared with his horſe on the other ſide of the Nile, but it was then too late. Keſla Yaſous was ſo ſtrongly poſted, and the banks of the river ſo guarded with fire-arms, down to the wateredge, that Faſil and all his army would not have dared to attempt the paſſage, or even approach the banks of the river.

As ſoon as Ras Michael received the intelligence, he diſpatched the Fit-Auraris, Netcho, to take poſt upon the ford of the Kelti, a large river, but rather broad than deep, about three miles off. He himſelf followed early in the morning, and paſſed the Kelti juſt at ſun-riſe, without halting; he then advanced to meet Keſla Yaſous, as the army began to want proviſions, the little flour that had been brought over, or which the ſoldiers had taken with them, being nearly exhauſted during that night and the morning after. It was found, too, that the men had but little powder, none of them having recruited their quantity ſince the hunting of the deer; but what they had was in perfect good order, being kept in horns and ſmall wooden bottles, corked in ſuch a manner as to be ſecured from water of any kind. Keſla Yaſous, therefore, being in poſſeſſion of the baggage, the powder, and the proviſions, a junction with him was abſolutely neceſſary, and they expected to effect this at Wainadega, about twenty miles from their laſt night's quarters.

The ground was all firm and level between Kelti and the Avoley, a ſpace of about 15 miles.

Ras Michael halted after paſſing the Kelti, and ſent on the Fit-Auraris about five miles before him; he then ordered what quantity of flour, or proviſions of any kind could be found, to be diſtributed among the men, and directed them to refreſh themſelves for an hour before they again began their march, becauſe they might expect ſoon to engage with Faſil. The day being clear, and the ſun hot, thoſe that the cold affected, from the paſſage of laſt night, began to recover their former health and agility; their clothes were now all dry, clean waſhed, and comfortable; and had it not been for the fatigue that remained from the two laſt days, and the ſhort allowance to which they were reduced, perhaps there were few occaſions wherein the army was fitter for an engagement. Being now diſembarraſſed from dangerous rivers, they were on dry ſolid ground, which they had often marched over before in triumph, and where all the villages around them, lying in ruins, put them in mind of many victorious campaigns, and eſpecially the recent one at Fagitta over this ſame Faſil. Add to all this, they were on their way home to Gondar, and that alone made them march with a tenfold alacrity. Gondar, they thought, was to be the end of all their cares, a place of relaxation and eaſe for the reſt of the rainy ſeaſon.

It was between twelve and one we heard the Fit-Auraris engaged, and there was ſharp firing on both ſides, which ſoon ceaſed. Michael ordered his army immediately to halt; he and the king, and Billetana Gueta Tecla, commanded the van; Welleta Michael, and Ayto Teſfos of Siré, the rear. Having marched a little farther, he changed his order of battle; he drew up the body of troops which he commanded, together with the king, on a flat, large hill, with two valleys running parallel to the ſides of it like trenches. Beyond theſe trenches were two higher ridges of hills that ran along the ſide of them, about half a muſket-ſhot from him; the valleys were ſoft ground which yet could bear horſes, and theſe hills, on his right and on his left, advanced about 100 yards on each ſide farther than the line of his front. The groſs of theſe ſide-diviſions occupied the height; but a line of ſoldiers from them came down to the edge of the valleys like wings. In the plain ground, about three hundred yards directly in his front, he had placed all the cavalry, except the king's body-guards drawn up before him, commanded by an old officer of Mariam Barea. As prince George was in the cavalry, he ſtrongly ſolicited the Ras at leaſt to let him remain with them, and ſee them engage; but the Ras, conſidering his extreme youth and natural raſhneſs, called him back, and placed him beſide me before the king. It was not long before the Fit-Auraris's two meſſengers arrived, running like deer along the plain, which was not abſolutely flat, but ſloped gently down towards us, declining, as I ſhould gueſs, not a fathom in fifteen.

Their account was, that they had fallen in with Faſil's Fit-Auraris; that they had attacked him ſmartly, and, though the enemy were greatly ſuperior, being all horſe, except a few muſqueteers, had killed four of them. The Ras having firſt heard the meſſage of the Fit-Auraris alone, he ſent a man to report it to the king; and, immediately after this, he ordered two horſemen to go full gallop along the eaſt ſide of the hill, the low road to Wainadega, to warn Keſla Yaſous of Faſil's being near at hand; he likewiſe directed the Fit-Auraris to advance cautiouſly till he had ſeen Faſil, and to purſue no party that ſhould retreat before him.

The King, the Ras, and the whole army, began to be in pain for Keſla Yaſous; and we ſhould have changed our ground, and marched forward immediately, had we not heard the alarm-guns fired by Fit-Auraris Netcho, and preſently he and his party came in, the men running, and the horſes at full gallop. Ras Michael had given his orders, and returned to the preſence of the king on his mule; he could not venture among horſe, being wounded in the middle of the thigh, and lame in that leg, but always charged on a mule among the muſquetry. He ſaid ſhortly to the king, "No fear, Sir, ſtand firm; Faſil is loſt if he fights to-day on this ground."

Fasil appeared at the top of the hill. I have no gueſs about the number of ſuch large bodies of troops, but, by thoſe more uſed to ſuch computations, it is ſaid he had about 3000 horſe. It was a fine ſight, but the evening was beginning to be overcaſt. After having taken a full view of the army, they all began to move ſlowly down the hill, beating their kettle-drums. There were two trees a little before the cavalry, that were advanced beyond our front. Faſil ſent down a party to ſkirmiſh with theſe, and he himſelf halted after having made a few paces down the hill. The two bodies of horſe met juſt half way at the two trees, and mingled together, as appeared at leaſt, with very deciſive intention; but whether it was by orders or from fear, (for they were not overmatched in numbers) our horſe turned their backs and came precipitately down, ſo that we were afraid they would break in upon the foot. Several ſhots were fired from the center at them by order of the Ras, who cried out aloud in deriſion, "Take away theſe horſes and ſend them to the mill." They divided, however, to the right and left, into the two graſſy valleys under cover of the muſquetry, and a very few horſe of Faſil's were carried in along with them, and ſlain by the ſoldiers on the ſide of the hill. On the king's ſide no man of note was miſſing but Welleta Michael, nephew of Ras Michael, whoſe horſe falling, he was taken priſoner and carried off by Faſil.

A FEW minutes after this, arrived a meſſenger from Faſil, a dwarf, named Doho, a man always employed on errands of this kind; it is an intercourſe which is permitted, and the meſſenger not only protected, but rewarded, as I have before obſerved; it is a ſingular cuſtom, and none but ſhrewd fellows are ſent, very capable of making obſervations, and Doho was one of theſe. He told the Ras to prepare immediately, for Faſil intended to attack him as ſoon as he had brought his foot up: Doho further added a requeſt from his maſter, as a mark of his duty, that the king might not change his dreſs that day, leſt he might fall into the hands of ſome of the ſtranger troops of Galla, who might not know him otherwiſe, or ſhew the proper reſpect to his perſon. The Ras, I was told afterwards, for he was too far before us to hear him, laughed violently at this compliment. "Tell Faſil, ſays he, to wait but a few minutes where he now is, and I promiſe him that the king ſhall dreſs in any way he pleaſes." When Doho's meſſage was told to the king, he ſent back anſwer to Ras Michael, "Let Doho tell Faſil from me, that, if I had known thoſe two trees had been where they are, I would have brought Welleta Gabriel,

briel, Ozoro Eſther's ſteward, to him; by which he very archly alluded to the battle of Fagitta, where that drunkard, ſhooting from behind a tree, and killing one Galla, made all the reſt fly for fear of the zibib.

Doho being thus diſmiſſed, the whole army advanced immediately at a very briſk pace, hooping and ſcreaming, as is their cuſtom, in a moſt harſh and barbarous manner, crying out Hatzé Ali! Michael Ali! But Faſil, who ſaw the forward countenance of the king's troops, and that a few minutes would lay him under neceſſity of riſking a battle, which he did not intend, withdrew his troops at a ſmart trot over the ſmooth downs, returning towards Boſkon Abbo. It ſeems, as we heard afterwards, he was in as great anxiety about the fate of Welleta Yaſous, of whom he had no intelligence, as we had been for that of Keſla Yaſous; and he had got as yet no intelligence till he had taken Welleta Michael priſoner; he had heard no firing, nor did he conſequently know whether Keſla Yaſous had paſſed the Nile with the Ras or not; he had, therefore, left his camp, and marched with his horſe only to take a view of Michael, but had no ſort of intention to give him battle; and he was now very much exaſperated againſt both Guſho and Powuſſen, by whom he ſaw plainly that he had been betrayed.

This is what was called the battle of Limjour, from a village burnt by Ras Michael laſt campaign, which ſtood where the two trees are; the name of a battle is ſurely more than it deſerves. Had Faſil been half as willing as the Ras, it could not have failed being a deciſive one. The Ras, who ſaw that Faſil would not fight, eaſily penetrated his reaſons, and no ſooner was he gone, and his own drums ſilent,

than

than he heard a nagareet beat, and knew it to be that of Kefla Yaſous. This general encamped upon the river Avoley, leaving his tents and baggage under a proper guard, and had marched with the beſt and freſheſt of his troops to join Michael before the engagement. All was joy at meeting, every rank of men joined in extolling the merit and conduct of their leaders; and, indeed, it may be fairly ſaid, the ſituation of the king and the army was deſperate at that inſtant, when the troops were ſeparated on different ſides of the Nile; nor could they have been ſaved but by the ſpeedy reſolution taken by Kefla Yaſous to march without loſs of time and paſs at the ford of Delakus, and the diligence and activity with which he executed that reſolution.

Although a good part of Kefla Yaſous's ſoldiers were left at the Avoley, the Ras, as a mark of confidence, gave him the command of the rear. We were retreating before an enemy, and it was, therefore, the poſt of honour, where the Ras would have been himſelf, had not Kefla Yaſous joined us. We ſoon marched the five miles, or thereabout, that remained to the Avoley, and arrived juſt as the ſun was ſetting, and there heard from the ſpies that Welleta Yaſous with his troops had retired again to Goutto, after having been joined by Woodage Aſahel. There again were freſh rejoicings, as every one recovered their baggage and proviſions, many rejoined their friends they had given over as loſt at the paſſage, and the whole army prepared their ſupper. All but Ras Michael ſeemed to have their thoughts bent upon ſleep and reſt; whilſt he, the moſt infirm and aged of the army, no ſooner was under cover of his tent than he ordered the drum to beat for aſſembling a council. What paſſed there I did not know; I believe nothing but a repetition of the circumſtances that induced Kefla Yaſous to advance to Delakus, for, after ſupper, juſt before the king went to bed in the evening, a man from Kefla Yaſous brought the four prieſts of Mariam Net, who had been the guides to the ford at Delakus. The king ordered meat to be ſet before them, but they had done very well already with Kefla Yaſous, and, therefore, only took a ſmall piece of bread and a cup of bouza, the eating and drinking in preſence of the king being an aſſurance that their life was ſafe and pardon real. They had then five ounces of gold, and ſeveral changes of clothes given to each of them, and the king took them to Gondar with him, to provide for them there, out of the reach of the revenge of Faſil, and placed them in the church of Hamar Noh*.

The army marched next day to Dingleber, a high hill, or rock, approaching ſo cloſe to the lake as ſcarcely to leave a paſſage between. Upon the top of this rock is the king's houſe. As we arrived very early there, and were now out of Faſil's government, the king inſiſted upon treating Ras Michael and all the people of conſideration. A great quantity of cattle had been ſent thither from Dembea by thoſe who had eſtates in the neighbourhood, out of which he gave ten oxen to Ras Michael, ten to Kefla Yaſous, the ſame number to ſeveral others, and one to myſelf, with two ounces of gold for Strates and Sebaſtos to buy mules; but they had already provided themſelves; for, beſides the two they rode upon of mine, they and my ſervants had picked up four others in very good condition, whoſe maſters had probably periſhed in the river, for they were never claimed afterwards.

---

* This is a large church belonging to the palace, called by this extraordinary name, *Noah's Ark*.

JUST as the king ſat down to dinner an accident happened that occaſioned great trepidation among all his ſervants. A black eagle* was chaſed into the king's tent by ſome of the birds of prey that hover about the camp; and it was after in the mouth of every one the king would be dethroned by a man of inferior birth and condition. Every body at that time looked to Faſil: the event proved the application falſe, though the omen was true. Powuſſen of Begemder was as low-born as Faſil, as great a traitor, but more ſucceſsful, to whom the ominous preſage pointed; and, though we cannot but look upon the whole as accident, it was but too ſoon fulfilled.

IN the evening of the 29th arrived at Dingleber two horſemen from Faſil, clad in habits of peace, and without arms; they were known to be two of his principal ſervants, were grave, genteel, middle-aged men; this meſſage had nothing of Doho's buffoonery. They had an audience early after their coming, firſt of the Ras, then of the King. They ſaid, and ſaid truly, that Faſil had repaſſed the Kelti, was encamped on the oppoſite ſide, and was not yet joined by Welleta Yaſous. Their errand was, to deſire that the Ras might not fatigue his men by unneceſſarily hurrying on to Gondar, becauſe he might reſt ſecured of receiving no further moleſtation from Faſil their maſter, as he was on his march to Burè. They told the Ras the whole of the conſpiracy, as far as it regarded him, and the agreement that Powuſſen and Guſho had made with their maſter to ſurround him at Derdera: they mentioned, moreover, how ſenſible Faſil was of their

---

* See a figure of this bird in the Appendix.

treaſon towards him; that, inſtead of keeping their word, they had left him to engage the King and the Ras's whole force at a time when they knew the greateſt part of his Galla troops were retired to the other ſide of the Nile, and could be aſſembled with difficulty: That if the Ras by chance had croſſed at Delakus, as Keſla Yaſous had done, inſtead of embarraſſing his army among the rivers of Maitſha, and croſſing the Nile at that moſt dangerous place near Amlac-Ohha, (a paſſage never before attempted in the rainy ſeaſon) the conſequence would have been, that he muſt have either fought at great diſadvantage with an inferior army againſt the Ras, or have retired to Metchakel, leaving his whole country to the mercy of his enemies. Faſil declared his reſolution never again to appear in arms againſt the king, but that he would hold his government under him, and pay the accuſtomed taxes punctually: he promiſed alſo, that he would renounce all manner of connection with Guſho and Powuſſen, as he had already done, and he would take the field againſt them next ſeaſon with his whole force, whenever the king ordered him. The meſſengers concluded, with deſiring the Ras to give Faſil his grand-daughter, Welleta Selaſſé, in marriage, and that he would then come to Gondar without diſtruſt.

At the audience they had of the king the ſame night, they added, That Faſil could not truſt Ras Michael, he broke his word ſo often, and had ſo many reſervations and evaſions in his promiſes.

The Ras, though he did not believe all this, made no difficulty in agreeing to every thing that they deſired. He promiſed the grand-daughter; and, as an earneſt of his believing the reſt, the king's two nagareets were brought to the door of the tent, where, to our very great ſurpriſe, we heard it proclaimed, "Faſil is governor of the Agow, Maitſha, Gojam, and Damot; proſperity to him, and long may he live a faithful ſervant to the king our maſter!"—This was an extraordinary revolution in ſo ſmall a ſpace of time. It was ſcarce 43 hours ſince Faſil had laid a ſcheme for drowning the greater part of the army in the Nile, and cutting the throats of the reſidue on both ſides of it; it was not twenty-four hours, ſince he had met us to fight in open field, and now he was become the king's lieutenant-general in four of the moſt opulent provinces of Abyſſinia. This was produced, however, by the neceſſity of the times, and both parties were playing at the ſame game who ſhould over-reach the other. Faſil's meſſengers were magnificently cloathed, and it was firſt intended they ſhould have gone back to him; but, after reflection, another perſon was ſent, theſe two chuſing to go to Gondar with the king to remain hoſtages for Faſil's word, and to bring back his inveſtiture from thence to Burè. The whole camp abandoned itſelf to joy.

LATE in the evening Ozoro Eſther came to the king's tent. She had been ill, and alarmed, as ſhe well might, at the paſſage of the Nile, which had given her a more delicate look than ordinary; ſhe was dreſſed all in white, and I thought I ſeldom had ſeen ſo handſome a woman. The king, as I have mentioned, had ſent ten oxen to Ras Michael, but he had given twenty to Ozoro Eſther; and it was to thank him for this extraordinary mark of favour that ſhe had come to viſit him in his tent. I had for ſome time paſt, indeed, thought they were not inſenſible to the merit of each other. Upon her thanking the king for the diſtinction he had ſhewn her, Madam, ſaid he, your huſband Ras Michael is intent upon employing, in the beſt way poſſible for my ſervice, thoſe of the army that are ſtrong and vigorous; you, I am told, beſtow your care on the ſick and diſabled, and, by your attention, they are reſtored to their former health and activity; the ſtrong active ſoldier eats the cows that I have ſent to the Ras; the enfeebled and ſick recover upon yours, for which reaſon I ſent you a double portion, that you may have it in your power to do double good. After this, the room was cleared, and ſhe had an audience alone for half an hour. I doubt very much whether Ras Michael had any ſhare in the converſation; the king was in the very gayeſt humour, and went to reſt about twelve. The Ras loved Ozoro Eſther, but was not jealous.

I HAD violent threatenings of the ague, and had gone to bed full of reflections on extraordinary events that, in a few hours, had as it were crowded upon one another. I had appointed Faſil's ſervants to come to my tent in the evening. I underſtood a council had been called, to which Welleta Kyrillos, the king's hiſtoriographer, had been ſent for, and inſtructed how to give an account of this campaign of Maitſha, the paſſage of the Nile, and the meeting with Faſil at Limjour. Keſla Yaſous's march to Delakus, and paſſage there, were ordered to be written in gold letters, and ſo was Faſil's appointment to Damot and Maitſha. From this authentic copy, and what I myſelf heard or obſerved, I formed theſe notes of the campaign.

ON the 30th of May nothing material happened, and, in a few days, we arrived at Gondar. The day before we entered, being encamped on the river Kemona, came two meſſengers from Guſho and Powuſſen, with various excuſes why they had not joined. They were very ill received by the Ras, and refuſed an audience of the king. Their preſent, which is always new clothes to ſome value, was a ſmall piece of dark-blue Surat cloth, value about half-a-crown, intended as an affront; they were not ſuffered to ſleep in the camp, but forwarded to Faſil where they were going.

The 3d of June the army encamped on the river Kahha, under Gondar. From the time we left Dingleber, ſome one or other of the Ras's confidential friends had arrived every day. Several of the great officers of ſtate reached us at the Kemona, many others met us at Abba Samuel. I did not perceive the news they brought increaſed the ſpirits either of the King or the Ras; the ſoldiers, however, were all contented, becauſe they were at home; but the officers, who ſaw farther, wore very different countenances, eſpecially thoſe that were of Amhara.

I, in particular, had very little reaſon to be pleaſed; for, after having undergone a conſtant ſeries of fatigues, dangers, and expences, I was returned to Gondar diſappointed of my views in arriving at the ſource of the Nile, without any other acquiſition than a violent ague. The place where that river riſes remained ſtill as great a ſecret as it had been ever ſince the cataſtrophe of Phaeton:—

Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem,
Occuluitque caput, quod adhuc latet.———

Ovid. Metam. lib. ii.

CHAP. VII.

King and Army retreat to Tigré—Intereſting Events following that Retreat—The Body of Joas is found—Favourable Turn of the King's Affairs—Socinios, a new King, proclaimed at Gondar.

THE king had heard that Guſho and Powuſſen, with Gojam under Ayto Aylo, and all the troops of Beleſſen and Laſta, were ready to fall upon him in Gondar as ſoon as the rains ſhould have ſwelled the Tacazzé, ſo that the army could not retire into Tigré; and it was now thought to be the inſtant this might happen, as the king's proclamation in favour of Faſil, eſpecially the giving him Gojam, it was not doubted, would haſten the motion of the rebels. Accordingly that very morning, after the king arrived, the proclamation was made at Gondar, giving Faſil Gojam, Damot, the Agow, and Maitſha; after which his two ſervants were again magnificently cloathed, and ſent back with honour.

As I had never deſpaired, ſome way or other, of arriving at the fountains of the Nile, from which we were not fifty miles diſtant when we turned back at Karcagna, ſo I never neglected to improve every means that held out to me the leaſt probability of accompliſhing this end. I had been very attentive and ſerviceable to Faſil's ſervants while in the camp. I ſpoke greatly of their maſter, and, when they went away, gave each of them a ſmall preſent for himſelf, and a trifle alſo for Faſil. They had, on the other hand, been very importunate with me as a phyſician to preſcribe ſomething for a cancer on the lip, as I underſtood it to be, with which Welleta Yaſous, Faſil's principal general, was afflicted.

I had been adviſed, by ſome of my medical friends, to carry along with me a preparation of hemlock, or cicuta, recommended by Dr Stork, a phyſician at Vienna. A conſiderable quantity had been ſent me from France by commiſſion, with directions how to uſe it. To keep on the ſafe ſide, I preſcribed ſmall doſes to Welleta Yaſous, being much more anxious to preſerve myſelf from reproach than warmly ſolicitous about the cure of my unknown patient. I gave him poſitive advice to avoid eating raw meat; to keep to a milk diet, and drink plentifully of whey when he uſed this medicine. They were overjoyed at having ſucceeded ſo well in their commiſſion, and declared before the king, That Faſil their maſter would be more pleaſed with receiving a medicine that would reſtore Welleta Yaſous to health, than with the magnificent appointments the king's goodneſs had beſtowed upon him. "If it is ſo, ſaid I, in this day of grace, I will aſk two favours."—"And that's a rarity, ſays the king; come, out with them; I don't believe anybody is deſirous you ſhould be refuſed; I certainly am not; only I bar one of them, you are not to relapſe into your uſual deſpondency, and talk of going home."—"Well, Sir, ſaid I, I obey, and that is not one of them. They are theſe—You ſhall give me, and oblige Faſil to ratify it, the village Geeſh, and the ſource where the Nile riſes, that I may be from thence furniſhed with honey for myſelf and ſervants; it ſhall ſtand me inſtead of Tangouri, near Emfras, and, in value, it is not worth ſo much. The ſecond is, That, when I ſhall ſee that it is in his power to carry me to Geeſh, and ſhew me thoſe ſources, Faſil ſhall do it upon my requeſt, without fee or reward, and without excuſe or evaſion.

THEY all laughed at the eaſineſs of the requeſt; all declared that this was nothing, and wiſhed to do ten times as much. The king ſaid, "Tell Faſil I do give the village of Geeſh, and thoſe fountains he is ſo fond of, to Yagoube and his poſterity for ever, never to appear under another's name in the deftar, and never to be taken from him, or exchanged, either in peace or war. Do you ſwear this to him in the name of your maſter." Upon which they took the two fore fingers of my right hand, and, one after the other, laid the two fore-fingers of their right hand acroſs them, then kiſſed them; a form of ſwearing uſed there, at leaſt among thoſe that call themſelves Chriſtians. And as Azage Kyrillos, the king's ſecretary and hiſtorian, was then preſent, the king ordered him to enter the gift in the deftar, or revenue-book, where the taxes and revenue of the king's lands are regiſtered. "I will write it, ſays the old man, in letters of gold, and, poor as I am, will give him a village four times better than either Geeſh or Tangouri, if he will take a wife and ſtay amongſt us, at leaſt till my eyes are cloſed." It will be eaſily gueſſed this rendered the converſation a chearful one. Faſil's ſervants retired to ſet out the next day, gratified to their utmoſt wiſh, and, as ſoon as the king was in bed, I went to my apartment likewiſe.

But very different thoughts were then occupying Michael and his officers. They could not truſt Faſil, and, beſides, he could do them no ſervice; the rain was ſet in, and he was gone home; the weſtern part of the kingdom was ready to riſe upon them; Woggora, to the north, immediately in his way, was all in arms, and impatient to revenge the ſeverities they had ſuffered when Michael firſt marched to Gondar. The Tacazzé, which ſeparates Tigrè from Woggora, and runs at the foot of the high mountains of Samen, was one of the largeſt and moſt rapid rivers in Abyſſinia, and, though not the firſt to overflow, was, when ſwelled to its height, impaſſable by horſe or foot, rolling down prodigious ſtones and trees with its current. Dangerous as the paſſage was, however, there was no ſafety but in attempting it: Michael, therefore, and every ſoldier with him, were of opinion that, if they muſt periſh, they ſhould rather meet death in the river, on the confines of their own country, than fall alive into the hands of their enemies in Amhara. For this, preparation had been making night and day, ſince Ras Michael entered Gondar, and probably before it.

There was in Beleſſen, on the neareſt and eaſieſt way to a ford of the Tacazzè, a man of quality called Adero, and his ſon Zor Woldo. To theſe two Ras Michael uſed to truſt the care of the police of Gondar when he was abſent upon any expedition; they were very active and capable, but had fallen from their allegiance, and joined Powuſſen and Guſho, at leaſt in councils. The Ras, immediately upon arriving at Gondar, diſſembling what he knew of their treaſon, had ſent to them to prepare a quantity of flour for the troops that were to paſs their way; to get together what horſes they could as quietly as poſſible; to ſend him word what ſtate the ford was in; and alſo, if Powuſſen had made any movement forward; or if Ayto Tesfos, governor of Samen, had ſhewn any diſpoſition to diſpute the paſſage through Woggora into Tigré. Word was immediately returned by the traitor Adero, that the ford was as yet very paſſable; that it was ſaid Powuſſen was marching towards Maitſha; that Ayto Tesfos was at home upon his high rock, the ſeat of his government, and that no time was to be loſt, as he believed he had already flour enough to ſuffice; he added alſo, that it would be dangerous to collect more, for it would give the alarm. This was all received as truth, and a meſſenger ſent back with orders, that Zor Woldo ſhould leave the flour in ſmall bags at Ebenaat, and that he ſhould himſelf and his father wait the Ras at the ford, with what horſe they had, the fourth day from that, in the evening.

THE next morning the whole army was in motion. I had the evening before taken leave of the king in an interview which coſt me more than almoſt any one in my life. The ſubſtance was, That I was ill in my health, and quite unprepared to attend him into Tigré; that my heart was ſet upon completing the only purpoſe of my coming into Abyſſinia, without which I ſhould return into my own country with diſgrace; that I hoped, through his majeſty's influence, Faſil might find ſome way for me to accompliſh it; if not, I truſted ſoon to ſee him return, when I hoped it would be eaſy; but, if I then went to Tigré, I was fully perſuaded I ſhould never have the reſolution to come again to Gondar.

He ſeemed to take heart at the confidence with which I ſpoke of his return. "You, Yagoube, ſays he, in a humble, complaining tone, could tell me, if you pleaſed, whether I ſhall or not, and what is to befal me; thoſe inſtruments and thoſe wheels, with which you are conſtantly looking at the ſtars, cannot be for any uſe unleſs for prying into futurity."—"Indeed, ſaid I, prince, theſe are things by which we guide ſhips at ſea, and by theſe we mark down the ways that we travel by land; teach them to people that never paſſed them before, and, being once traced, keep them thus to be known by all men for ever. But of the decrees of Providence, whether they regard you or myſelf, I know no more than the mule upon which you ride."—"Tell me then, I pray, tell me, what is the reaſon you ſpeak of my return as certain?"—"I ſpeak, ſaid I, from obſervation, from reflections that I have made, much more certain than prophecies and divinations by ſtars. The firſt campaign of your reign at Fagitta, when you was relying upon the diſpoſitions that the Ras had moſt ably and ſkillfully made, a drunkard, with a ſingle ſhot, defeated a numerous army of your enemies. Powuſſen and Guſho were your friends, as you thought, when you marched out laſt, yet they had, at that very inſtant, made a league to deſtroy you at Derdera; and nothing but a miracle could have ſaved you, ſhut up between two lakes and three armies. It was neither you nor Michael that diſordered their councils, and made them fail in what they had concerted. You was for burning Samſeen, whilſt Woodage Aſahel was there in ambuſh with a large force, with a knowledge of all the fords, and maſter of all the inhabitants of the country. Remember how you paſſed thoſe rivers, holding hand in hand, and drawing one another over. Could you have done this with an enemy behind you, and ſuch an enemy as Woodage Aſahel? He would have followed and harraſſed you till you took the ford at Goutto, and there was Welleta Yaſous waiting to oppoſe you with 6000 men on the oppoſite bank. When Ras Michael marched by Mariam Net, he found the prieſts at their homes. Was that the caſe in any of the other churches we paſſed? No; all were fled for fear of Michael; yet theſe were more guilty than any by their connections with Faſil; notwithſtanding which, they alone, of all others, ſtaid, though they knew not why; an inviſible hand held them that they might operate your preſervation. Nothing could have ſaved the army but the deſperate paſſage, ſo tremendous that it will exceed the belief of man, croſſing the Nile that night. Yet if the prieſts had croſſed before this, not a man would have proceeded to the ford. The prieſts would have been Ras Michael's priſoners, and, on the other ſide, they never would have ſpoken a word whilſt in the preſence of Michael. Providence, therefore, kept them with Keſla Yaſous; all was diſcovered, and the army ſaved by the retreat, and his ſpeedy paſſing at the ford of Delakus.

WHAT would have happened to Keſla Yaſous, had Faſil marched down to Delakus either before or after the paſſage? Keſla Yaſous would have been cut off before Ras Michael had paſſed the Kelti; inſtead of which, an unknown cauſe detained him, moſt infatuated-like, beating his kettle-drums behind Boſkon Abbo, while our army under the Ras was ſwimming,

ſwimming that dangerous river, and moſt of us paſſing the night, naked, without tents, proviſion, or powder. Nor did he ever think of preſenting himſelf till we had warmed ourſelves by an eaſy march in a fine day, when we were every way his ſuperiors, and Keſla Yaſous in his rear. From all theſe ſpecial marks of the favour of an over-ruling Providence, I do believe ſtedfaſtly that God will not leave his work half finiſhed. "He it is who, governing the whole univerſe, has yet reſerved ſpecially to himſelf the department of war; he it is who has ſtiled himſelf the God of Battles." The king was very much moved, and, as I conceived, perſuaded. He ſaid, "O Yagoube, go but with me to Tigrè, and I will do for you whatever you deſire me."— "You do, Sir, ſaid I, whatever I deſire you, and more. I have told you my reaſons why that cannot be; let me ſtay here a few months, and wait your return." The king then adviſed me to live entirely at Koſcam with the Iteghé, without going out unleſs Faſil came to Gondar, and to ſend him punctually word how I was treated. Upon this we parted with inexpreſſible reluctance. He was a king worthy to reign over a better people; my heart was deeply penetrated with thoſe marks of favour and condeſcenſion which I had uniformly received from him ever ſince I entered his palace.

On the 5th of June, while Powuſſen, Adero, and the conſpirators were waiting his paſſage through Beleſſen, (that is to the S. W.) the king's army marched towards Koſcam, over the mountain Debra Tzai towards Walkayt, and the low, hot provinces of Abyſſinia which lie to the N. E. ſo that the diſtance between them increaſed every day in the greateſt proportion poſſible.

The queen ordered her gates at Koſcam to be ſhut. A little before the Ras mounted his mule, Ozoro Eſther and her ſervants took refuge with her mother the Iteghè; Gondar was like a town which had been taken by an enemy; every one that had arms in his hands did juſt what he pleaſed.

Two very remarkable things were ſaid to have happened the night before Michael left the city. He had always pretended, that, before he undertook an expedition, a perſon, or ſpirit, appeared to him, who told him the iſſue and conſequence of the meaſures he was then taking; this he imagined to be St Michael the archangel, and he preſumed very much upon this intercourſe. In a council that night, where none but friends were preſent, he had told them that his ſpirit had appeared ſome nights before, and ordered him, in his retreat, to ſurpriſe the mountain of Wechné, and either ſlay or carry with him to Tigré the princes ſequeſtered there. Nebrit Tecla, governor of Axum, with his two ſons, (all concerned in the late king's murder) were, it is ſaid, ſtrong adviſers of this meaſure; but Ras Michael, (probably ſatiated with royal blood already) Kefla Yaſous, and all the more worthy men of any conſequence, acting on principle, abſolutely refuſed to conſent to it. It was upon this the paſſage by Beleſſen was ſubſtituted inſtead of the attempt on Wechné, and it was determined to conceal it.

The next advice which, the Ras ſaid, this devil, or angel, gave him, was, that they ſhould ſet fire to the town of Gondar, and burn it to the ground, otherwiſe his good fortune was to leave him there for ever; and for this there was a great number of advocates, Michael ſeeming to lean that way himſelf. But, when it was reported to the king, that young prince put a direct negative upon it, by declaring that he would rather ſtay in Gondar, and fall by the hands of his enemies, than either conquer them, or eſcape from them, by the commiſſion of ſo enormous a crime. When this was publicly known, it procured the king univerſal good-will, as was experienced afterwards, when he and Michael were finally defeated, and taken priſoners, upon their march in return to Gondar.

The army advanced rapidly towards Walkayt. Being near the Tacazzé, they turned ſhort upon Mai-Lumi, (the River of Limes) the governor of which, as I have already ſaid, in our journey from Maſuah, detained us ſeveral days at Addergey with a view to rob us, upon a report prevailing that Ras Michael was defeated at Fagitta. This thief the king ſurpriſed and made priſoner, ſet fire to his houſe after having plundered it, and carried him as hoſtage to Tigré, for the payment of a ſum which he laid upon every village to ſave them from being ſet on fire.

Being now ſafely arrived on the banks of the Tacazzè, the firſt province beyond which is that of Sirè, Michael ſent before him Ayto Tesfos the governor, a man exceedingly beloved, to aſſemble all ſort of aſſiſtance for paſſing the river. Every one flocked to the ſtream with the utmoſt alacrity; the water was deep, and the baggage wet in croſſing, but the bottom was good and hard; they paſſed both expeditiouſly and ſafely, and were received in Siré, and then in Tigré, with every demonſtration of joy.

Michael, now arrived in his government, ſet himſelf ſeriouſly to unite every part under his own juriſdiction. It was now the rainy ſeaſon; there was no poſſibility of taking the field, and a rebellion prevailed in two different diſtricts of his province. The ſons of Kaſmati Woldo, whoſe father Ras Michael put to death, had declared for themſelves, in their paternal government of Enderta, and Netcho who married Ras Michael's daughter, had taken proſſeſſion of the mountain Aromata, commonly called Haramat, an ancient ſtrong-hold of his father's, of which Michael had made himſelf maſter, while yet a young man, after beſieging it fifteen years. Netcho had alſo united himſelf with Za Menfus Kedus, a man of great property in that and the neighbouring country. Enderta is a flat, fertile territory, in the very ſouth-eaſt of Abyſſinia, depending on Tigré, and the mountain Aromata is ſituated near the middle of that province; before taking the field, Michael had directed the two Woldos to be aſſaſſinated during a feaſt at Enderta, and their party diſperſed of itſelf without farther effort.

THE mountain ſhewed a better countenance, and ſeemed to promiſe employment for a long time; it was garriſoned by old and veteran troops who had ſerved under Ras Michael. Netcho was the ſon of his hereditary enemy, anciently governor of that mountain, whom he had reconciled by giving him his daughter in marriage; notwithſtanding which he had now rebelled, juſt as the Ras marched to Maitſha againſt Faſil, by the perſuaſion of Guſho and Powuſſen, purpoſely that he might form a diverſion in Tigré, and for this reaſon he had little hopes of mercy, if ever he fell into the hands of Ras Michael. I had ſeen him often, and knew him; he was a tall, thin, dull man, of a ſoft temper, and eaſily impoſed upon. Za Menfus, the other chief in the mountain, was a very active, reſolute, enterpriſing man, of whom Michael was afraid. He had a large property all around the mountain; had been put in irons by Michael, and had eſcaped; beſides, on his return to Tigré, he had ſlain the father of Guebra Maſcal, Michael's nephew by marriage, who was commander in chief of all the muſquetry Michael had brought from Tigrè, ſo that he feared nothing ſo much as falling into Ras Michael's hands.

Ras Michael ſaw the danger of leaving an enemy ſo prepared and ſo ſituated behind him; he therefore, before the rainy ſeaſon was yet finiſhed, ordered the whole mountain to be ſurrounded with barracks, or huts, for his ſoldiers; he alſo erected three houſes for himſelf, the principal officers, and the king. The country people were called in to plow and ſow the ground in the neighbourhood, ſo that his intention was plainly never to riſe from thence till he had reduced the mountain of Aromata for the ſecond time, after having once before ſucceeded in taking it, after fifteen years ſiege, from Netcho's father. There we ſhall leave him at this ſiege, and return to Gondar.

It was on the 10th of June that Guſho and Powuſſen entered Gondar, and next day, the 11th, waited upon the queen; they both beſeeched her to return from Koſcam to the capital, and take into her hands the reins of government for the interim: this ſhe poſitively refuſed, unleſs peace was firſt made with Faſil. She ſaid, that Faſil was the only perſon who had endeavoured to avenge his maſter Joas's death; that he had continued till that day in arms in that quarrel; and, notwithſtanding all the offers that could be made her, ſhe never would come to Gondar, nor take any part in public buſineſs, without this condition. Faſil, moreover, informed her by a meſſenger, that there was no truſt to be put either in Guſho or Powuſſen; that they had failed in their engagement of following and fighting Ras

Michael in Maitſha, and had purpoſely ſtaid at home till a ſuperior army ſhould fall upon him ſingly, and ravage his country: That they had broken their word a ſecond time by entering into Gondar without him; whereas the agreement was, that they all three ſhould have done this at once, to ſettle the form of government by their joint deliberation. Many days paſſed in theſe negociations; Faſil always promiſing to come upon ſome condition or other, but never keeping his word, or ſtirring from Buré.

On the 20th, the queen's ſervants, who had gone to offer terms of reconciliation to Faſil on the part of Guſho and Powuſſen, returned to their homes. The ſame day he ordered it to be proclaimed in the market-place, That Ayto Teſfos ſhould be governor of Samen, and that whoever ſhould rob on that road, or commit any violence, ſhould ſuffer death. This was an act of power, purpoſely intended to affront Powuſſen and Guſho, and ſeemed to be opening a road for a correſpondence with Ras Michael; but, above all, it ſhewed contempt for their party and their cauſe, and that he conſidered his own as very diſtinct from theirs; for Teſfos had taken arms in the late king's lifetime, at the ſame time, and upon the ſame principles and provocation, as Faſil, and had never laid down his arms, or made peace with Ras Michael, but kept his government in defiance of him.

On the 24th, for fear of giving umbrage, I waited upon Guſho and Powuſſen at Gondar. I ſaw them in the ſame room where Ras Michael uſed to ſit. They were both lying on the floor playing at draughts, with the figure of a draught-table drawn with chalk upon the carpet; they offered no other civility or ſalutation, but, ſhaking me each by the hand, they played on, without lifting their heads, or looking me in the face.

Gusho began by aſking me, "Would it not have been better if you had gone with me to Amhara, as I deſired you, when I ſaw you laſt at Gondar? you would have ſaved yourſelf a great deal of fatigue and trouble in that dangerous march through Maitſha." To this I anſwered, "It is hard for me, who am a ſtranger, to know what is beſt to be done in ſuch a country as this. I was, as you may have heard, the king's gueſt, and was favoured by him; it was my duty therefore to attend him, eſpecially when he deſired it; and ſuch I am informed has always been the cuſtom of the country; beſides, Ras Michael laid his commands upon me." On this, ſays Powuſſen, ſhaking his head, "You ſee he cannot forget Michael and the Tigré yet."—"Very naturally, added Guſho, they were good to him; he was a great man in their time; they gave him conſiderable ſums of money, and he ſpent it all among his own ſoldiers, the king's guard, which they had given him to command after the Armenian. Yagoube taught him and his brother George to ride on horſeback like the Franks, and play tricks with guns and pikes on horſeback; folly, all of it to be ſure, but I never heard he meddled in affairs, or that he ſpoke ill of any one, much leſs did any harm, like thoſe raſcals the Greeks when they were in favour in Joas's time, for it was not their fault they did not direct every thing."—"I hope I never did, ſaid I; ſure I am I never ſo intended, nor had I any provocation. I have received much good uſage from every one; and the honour, if I do not forget, of a great many profeſſions and aſſurances of friendſhip from you, ſaid I, turning to Guſho. He heſitated a little, and then added very ſuperciliouſly, "Aye, aye, we were, as I think, always friends."—"You have had, ſays Powuſſen, a deviliſh many hungry bellies ſince we left Gondar."—"You will excuſe me, Sir, replied I, as to that article; I at no time ever found any difference whether you was in Gondar or not."—"There, ſays Guſho, by St Demetrius, there is a truth for you, and you don't often hear that in Begemder. May I ſuffer death if ever you gave a jar of honey to any white man in your life."—"But I, ſays Powuſſen, ſitting upright on the floor, and leaving off play, will give you, Yagoube, a preſent better than Guſho's paultry jars of honey. I have brought with me, addreſſing himſelf to me, your double-barrelled gun, and your ſword, which I took from that ſon of a wh—e Guebra Mehedin: by St Michael, continued Powuſſen, if I had got hold of that infidel I would have hanged him upon the firſt tree in the way for daring to ſay that he was one of my army when he committed that unmanly robbery upon your people. The Iteghé, your friend, would yeſterday have given me ten loads of wheat for your gun, for ſhe believes I am to carry it back to Begemder again, and do not mean to give it you, but come to my tent to-morrow and you ſhall have it." I very well underſtood his meaning, and that he wanted a preſent; but was happy to recover my gun at any rate.

I AROSE to get away, as what had paſſed did not pleaſe me; for before the king's retreat to Tigré, Guſho had ſat in my preſence uncovered to the waiſt, in token of humility, and many a cow, many a ſheep, and jar of honey he had ſent me; but my importance was now gone with the king; I was fallen! and they were reſolved, I ſaw, to make me ſenſible of it. I told the queen, on my return, what had paſſed.

They are both brutes, ſaid ſhe; but Guſho ſhould have known better.

The next morning, being the 25th, about eight o'clock I went to Powuſſen's tent. His camp was on the Kahha, near the church of Ledata, or the Nativity. After waiting near an hour, I was admitted; two women ſat by him, neither handſome nor cleanly dreſſed; and he returned me my gun and ſword, which was followed by a ſmall preſent on my part. This, ſays he, turning to the women, is a man who knows every thing that is to come; who is to die, and who is to live; who is to go to the devil, and who not; who loves her huſband, and who cuckolds him."—"Tell me then, Yagoube, ſays one of the women, will Tecla Haimanout and Michael ever come to Gondar again?"—"I do not know who you mean, Madam, ſaid I; is it the king and the Ras you mean?"—"Call him the King, ſays the other woman in half a whiſper; he loves the king."—"Well, aye, come, let it be the king then, ſays ſhe; will the King and Ras Michael ever come to Gondar?"—"Surely, ſaid I, the king is king, and will go to any part of his dominions he pleaſes, and when he pleaſes; do you not hear he is already on his way?"—"Aye, aye, by G--d, ſays Powuſſen, no fear he'll come with a vengeance, therefore I think it is high time that I was in Begemder." He then ſhrugged up his ſhoulders, and roſe, upon which I took my leave. He had kept me ſtanding all the time; and when I came to Koſcam I made my report as uſual to the Iteghé, who laughed very heartily, though the king's arrival, which was prophecied, was likely to be a very ſerious affair to her.

That very day, in the evening, came a ſervant from Ras Michael, with taunts and ſevere threats to the queen, to Powuſſen, and Guſho; he ſaid he was very quickly bringing the king back to Gondar, and being now old, intended to paſs the reſt of his life in Tigré; he, therefore, hoped they would await the king's coming to Gondar, and chuſe a Ras for his ſucceſſor from among themſelves, as he underſtood they were all friends, and would eaſily agree, eſpecially as it was to *oblige him*.

On the 27th, Guſho and Powuſſen waited upon the queen to take their leave. They declared it was not their intention to ſtay at Gondar, merely to be alternately the ſubject of merriment and ſcoffing to Michael and to Faſil, and upon this they immediately ſet out on their way home, without drum or trumpet, or any parade whatever.

Immediately after, arrived another ſervant from Faſil to the queen, deſiring that Powuſſen and Guſho might halt at Emfras, adding, that he had juſt then begun his march from Buré, and would be at Gondar in a few days. Guſho and Powuſſen did accordingly halt there, and were detained for the ſpace of ſix weeks, amuſed by falſe pretences and meſſages, in very uncomfortable quarters, till their armies diſbanded, the ſoldiers, from hunger and conſtant rains, deſerted their leaders, and went every man to his home.

In the beginning of Auguſt the queen came to Gondar, and ſat on the throne all day. She had not been there theſe three years, and I ſincerely wiſhed ſhe had not gone then. It was in meditation that day to chuſe a new king; ſhe was preſent at that deliberation, and her intention was known to place a ſon of Aylo, Joas's brother, a mere infant, upon the throne. All thoſe that were in fear of Michael, and it was very general at that time, cried out againſt an infant king at ſuch a critical period; but, old as that princeſs was, the deſire of reigning had again returned.

Upon the return of the Iteghé that night to Koſcam, Sanuda held a council of the principal officers that had remained at Gondar, and fixed upon one Welleta Girgis, a young man of about 24 years of age, who had, indeed, been reputed Yaſous's ſon, but his low life and manners had procured him ſafety and liberty by the contempt they had raiſed in Ras Michael. His mother, indeed, was of a noble origin, but ſo reduced in fortune as to have been obliged to gain her livelihood by carrying jars of water for hire. The mother ſwore this ſon was begot by Yaſous, and as that prince was known not to have been very nice in his choice of miſtreſſes, or limited in their number, it was, perhaps, as likely to be true as not, that Welleta Girgis was his ſon. He took the name of Socinios. On the morning after, the new king came to Koſcam, attended by Sanuda and his party, with guards, and all the enſigns of royalty. He threw himſelf at the Iteghé's feet, and begged her forgiveneſs if he had vindicated the rights of his birth, without her leave or participation; he declared his reſolution to govern entirely by her advice, and begged her to grant his requeſt and come to Gondar, and again take poſſeſſion of her place as Iteghé, or regent of the kingdom.

It was about the 10th of Auguſt that an accident happened, which it was generally thought would have determined Faſil to come to Gondar. A common woman, wife of a

Galla at Tchelga, a town upon the frontiers of Sennaar, being at variance with her huſband, upbraided him with being the perſon that, with his own hand, had aſſaſſinated the late king Joas. This Galla was immediately ſeized and ſent to Gondar, and was examined before the queen, where I was preſent. He, with very little heſitation, declared, That, on a night immediately after the battle of Azazo, he was ſent for to Ras Michael, who gave him ſome money and large promiſes, on condition that he would undertake to murder the king that night. The perſons preſent were Laeca Netcho, and his two ſons, Nebrit Tecla and his two ſons, Shalaka Becro relation to the preſent king, and Woldo Hawaryat a monk of Tigré. The priſoner ſaid, he was afraid, if he ſhould refuſe, they would murder him for the ſake of ſecrecy. He further ſaid, that they had given him ſpirits to drink till he was intoxicated, and then delivered to him the keys of the apartments where Joas was confined, and they all went with him to the palace; they found the unfortunate king alone, walking in his apartment, very penſive, and, though at the late hour of twelve at night, dreſſed in his uſual habit. Two of Laeca Netcho's ſons attempted to put a cord round his neck, but the king, being young and ſtrong, ſhewed a diſpoſition to defend himſelf, and wreſted the cord out of the murderers hands; upon which Zor Woldo (the name of the Galla) ſtruck him a violent blow with a bludgeon on the head, which felled him to the ground: The others then, with a ſhort cord, ſtrangled him, the monk, Woldo Hawaryat, crying, diſpatch him quickly; after this they carried the body to the neighbouring church of St Raphael, where a grave, or rather hole, was ready, into which they threw it with the clothes juſt as he was. The priſoner ſaid, That, when they were carrying the king's body out of the palace into the church-yard, over a breach in the church-yard wall, they were challenged by a perſon, who aſked them what they were about? to which they replied, Burying a ſtranger who died that day of a peſtilential fever.

Immediately upon this confeſſion, the Galla was carried out and hanged upon the daroo-tree before the king's gate. Many condemned this haſty execution, but many likewiſe thought it prudent; for he had already named a great part of the people about the queen as acceſſary to the death of her ſon.

I have ſaid his name was Zor Woldo; he was of the race of Galla, called Toluma, on the borders of Amhara; he had been formerly a ſervant to Kaſmati Becro; was of ſmall ſtature, thin and lightly made; his complexion a yellowiſh black, and ſingularly ill-favoured. When under the tree, he acknowledged the murder of the king with abſolute indifference; nor did he deſire any favour, or ſhew any fear of death. Zor Woldo's examination and declaration were ſent immediately to Faſil, who, as uſual, promiſed to come to Gondar quickly. The body of Joas was raiſed alſo, and laid in the church (in his clothes, juſt as he was dug up) upon a little ſtraw; his features were eaſily diſtinguiſhable, but ſome animal had ate part of his cheek.

The day after, I went from Koſcam to Gondar without acquainting the Iteghé, and took a Greek called Petros with me; he had been chamberlain to Joas. We went about eleven o'clock in the forenoon to the church of St Raphael, expecting to have ſeen many as curious as ourſelves, but, by reaſon of the atrociouſneſs of the act, now for the firſt time known to be true, and the fear of Ras Michael threatening Gondar every day, not a living ſoul was there but a monk belonging to the church itſelf, who kept the key. It was thought criminal to know what it was apparent Michael had wiſhed to conceal. Petros no ſooner ſaw his maſter's face than, ſaying, It is he! he ran off with all the ſpeed poſſible: for my part, I was ſhocked at the indecent manner in which the body was expoſed; it affected me more than the murder itſelf, for it appeared as if it had been thrown down upon the ground, the head, arms, and legs lying in all ſorts of directions, and great part of his haunch and thigh bare. I deſired the monk to lock the door, and come along with me to Petros's houſe. Petros was a merchant who ſold carpets, and ſuch ſort of goods uſed in the country, which he brought from Cairo. It was full an hour before we could make him behave ſenſibly, or deliver me a ſmall Perſian carpet, ſuch as Mahometans uſe to pray upon, that is about ſeven feet long and four feet broad, and a web of coarſe muſlin, which I bought of him. I told the prieſt (for Petros abſolutely refuſed to return to the church) how to lay the body decently upon the carpet, and to cover his face and every part with the muſlin cloth, which might be lifted when any body came to ſee the corpſe.

The prieſt received the carpet with great marks of ſatiſfaction, and told me it was he who had challenged the murderers when carrying the body over the wall; that he knew them well, and ſuſpected they had been about ſome miſchief; and, upon hearing the king was miſſing the next day, he was firmly convinced it was his body that had been buried. Upon going alſo to the place early in the morning,

ing, he had found one of the king's toes, and part of his foot, not quite covered with earth, from the haſte the murderers were in when they buried him; theſe he had put properly out of ſight, and conſtantly ever after, as he ſaid, had watched the place in order to hinder the grave from being diſturbed, or any other perſon being buried there.

About the beginning of October, Guebra Selaſſé, a ſervant of the king and one of the porters in the palace, came on a meſſage to the queen. It was a laconic one, but very eaſily underſtood.—"Bury your boy, now you have got him; or, when I come, I will bury him, and ſome of his relations with him." Joas, upon this, was privately buried. As this Selaſſé was a favourite of mine, who took care of my ſhoes when I pulled them off to go into the audience-room, I waited impatiently for this meſſenger's coming to my apartment, which he did late in the evening. I was alone, and he advanced ſo ſoftly that I did not at firſt hear or know him; but, when the door was ſhut, he began to give two or three capers; and, pulling out a very large horn, "Drink! drink! G—d d—n! repeating this two or three times, and brandiſhing his horn over his head. Selaſſé, ſaid I, have you loſt your ſenſes, or are you drunk? you uſed to be a ſober man."—"And ſo I am yet, ſays he, I have not taſted a morſel ſince noon; and, being tired of running about on my affairs, I am now come to you for my ſupper, as I am ſure you'll not poiſon me for my maſter's ſake, nor for my own either, and I have now enemies enough in Gondar."—"I then aſked, How is the king?"—"Did not you hear, ſaid he—Drink!—the king told me to ſay this to you that you might know me to be a true meſſenger." And an Iriſh ſervant of mine, opening the door in the inſtant, thinking it was time known to be true, and the fear of Ras Michael threatening Gondar every day, not a living ſoul was there but a monk belonging to the church itſelf, who kept the key. It was thought criminal to know what it was apparent Michael had wiſhed to conceal. Petros no ſooner ſaw his maſter's face than, ſaying, It is he! he ran off with all the ſpeed poſſible: for my part, I was ſhocked at the indecent manner in which the body was expoſed; it affected me more than the murder itſelf, for it appeared as if it had been thrown down upon the ground, the head, arms, and legs lying in all ſorts of directions, and great part of his haunch and thigh bare. I deſired the monk to lock the door, and come along with me to Petros's houſe. Petros was a merchant who ſold carpets, and ſuch ſort of goods uſed in the country, which he brought from Cairo. It was full an hour before we could make him behave ſenſibly, or deliver me a ſmall Perſian carpet, ſuch as Mahometans uſe to pray upon, that is about ſeven feet long and four feet broad, and a web of coarſe muſlin, which I bought of him. I told the prieſt (for Petros abſolutely refuſed to return to the church) how to lay the body decently upon the carpet, and to cover his face and every part with the muſlin cloth, which might be lifted when any body came to ſee the corpſe.

The prieſt received the carpet with great marks of ſatisfaction, and told me it was he who had challenged the murderers when carrying the body over the wall; that he knew them well, and ſuſpected they had been about ſome miſchief; and, upon hearing the king was miſſing the next day, he was firmly convinced it was his body that had been buried. Upon going alſo to the place early in the morning,

ing, he had found one of the king's toes, and part of his foot, not quite covered with earth, from the haſte the murderers were in when they buried him; theſe he had put properly out of ſight, and conſtantly ever after, as he ſaid, had watched the place in order to hinder the grave from being diſturbed, or any other perſon being buried there.

About the beginning of October, Guebra Selaſſé, a ſervant of the king and one of the porters in the palace, came on a meſſage to the queen. It was a laconic one, but very eaſily underſtood.—"Bury your boy, now you have got him; or, when I come, I will bury him, and ſome of his relations with him." Joas, upon this, was privately buried. As this Selaſſé was a favourite of mine, who took care of my ſhoes when I pulled them off to go into the audience-room, I waited impatiently for this meſſenger's coming to my apartment, which he did late in the evening. I was alone, and he advanced ſo ſoftly that I did not at firſt hear or know him; but, when the door was ſhut, he began to give two or three capers; and, pulling out a very large horn, "Drink! drink! G—d d—n! repeating this two or three times, and brandiſhing his horn over his head. Selaſſé, ſaid I, have you loſt your ſenſes, or are you drunk? you uſed to be a ſober man."—"And ſo I am yet, ſays he, I have not taſted a morſel ſince noon; and, being tired of running about on my affairs, I am now come to you for my ſupper, as I am ſure you'll not poiſon me for my maſter's ſake, nor for my own either, and I have now enemies enough in Gondar."—"I then aſked, How is the king?"—"Did not you hear, ſaid he—Drink!—the king told me to ſay this to you that you might know me to be a true meſſenger." And an Iriſh ſervant of mine, opening the door in the inſtant, thinking it was I that

I that called *drink!* Selaſſé adroitly continued, "He knows you are curious in horns, and ſent you this, deſiring me firſt to get it filled at the Iteghé's with good red wine, which I have done; and now, Hallo! Drink! Engliſhman!" He then added in a whiſper, when the ſervant had ſhut the door, "I'll tell it you all after ſupper, when the houſe is quiet, for I ſleep here all night, and go to Tigré to-morrow morning."

The time being come, he informed me Ras Michael and Faſil had made peace; Welleta Michael, the Ras's nephew, taken by Faſil at the battle of Limjour, had been the mediator; that the king and Michael, by their wiſe behaviour, had reconciled Tigré as one man, and that the Ras had iſſued a proclamation, remitting to the province of Tigré their whole taxes from the day they paſſed the Tacazzé till that time next year, in conſideration of their fidelity and ſervices; and this had been ſolemnly proclaimed in ſeveral places by beat of drum. The Ras declared, at the ſame time, that he would, out of his own private fortune, without other aſſiſtance, bear the expence of the campaign till he ſeated the king on his throne in Gondar. A kind of madneſs, he ſaid, had ſeized all ranks of people to follow their ſovereign to the capital; that the mountain Haramat ſtill held out; but that all the principal friends, both of Za Menfus and Netcho, had been up with the governors of that fortreſs offering terms of peace and forgiveneſs, and deſiring they would not be an obſtacle in the king's way, and a hinderance to his return, but that all terms had been as yet refuſed; however, ſays he, you know the Ras as well as I, he will play them a trick ſome of theſe days, winking with his eye, and then crying out, Drink!

I ASKED him if any notice had been taken of the carpet I had procured to cover the body of Joas, and hoped it had given no umbrage. He ſaid, "No; none at all; on the contrary, the king had ſaid twenty kind things upon it; that he was preſent alſo when a prieſt told it to Ras Michael, who only obſerved, Yagoube, who is a ſtranger in this country, is ſhocked to ſee a man taken out of his grave, and thrown like a dog upon the bare floor. This was all Michael ſaid, and he never mentioned a word on the ſubject afterwards;" nor did he, or the king, ever ſpeak of it to me upon their return to Gondar.

THE Iteghé, too, had much commended me, ſo did all the nobility, more than the thing deſerved; for ſurely common humanity dictated thus much, and the fear of Michael, which I had not, was the only cauſe that ſo proper an action was left in a ſtranger's power. Even Ozoro Eſther, enemy to Joas on account of the death of her huſband Mariam Barea, after I had attended her one Sunday from church to the houſe of the Iteghé, and when ſhe was ſet down at the head of a circle of all thoſe that were of diſtinction at the court, called out aloud to me, as I was paſſing behind, and pointing to one of the moſt honourable ſeats in the room, ſaid, Sit down there, Yagoube; God has exalted you above all in this country, when he has put it in your power, though but a ſtranger, to confer charity upon the king of it. All was now acclamation, eſpecially from the ladies; and, I believe, I may ſafely ſay, I had never in my life been a favourite of ſo many at one time.

I DISPATCHED Guebra Selaſſé with a meſſage to the king, that I was reſolved now to try once more a journey to the head of the Nile; that I thought I ſhould have time to be there, and return to Gondar, before the Tacazzé was fordable, ſoon after which I expected he would croſs it, and that nothing but want of health would prevent me from joining him in Beleſſen, or ſooner, if any opportunity ſhould offer.

Before I took my laſt reſolutions I waited upon the queen. She was exceedingly averſe to the attempt; ſhe bade me remember what the laſt trial had coſt me; and begged me to defer any further thoughts of it till Faſil arrived in Gondar; that ſhe would then deliver me into his hands, and procure from him ſure guides, together with a ſafe conduct. She bad me beware alſo of troops of Pagan Galla which were paſſing and repaſſing to and from his army, who, if they fell in with me, would murder me without mercy. She added, that the prieſts of Gojam and Damot were mortal enemies to all men of my colour, and, with a word, would raiſe the peaſants againſt me. This was all true; but then many reaſons, which I had weighed well, concurred to ſhew that this opportunity, dangerous as it was, might be the only time in which my enterpriſe could be practicable; for I was confident a ſpeedy rupture between Faſil and Michael would follow upon the king's return to Gondar. I determined therefore to ſet out immediately without farther loſs of time.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Second Journey to diſcover the Source of the Nile—Favourable Turn of the King's Affairs in Tigré—We fall in with Faſil's Army at Bamba.

THOUGH the queen ſhewed very great diſlike to my attempting this journey at ſuch a time, yet ſhe did not poſitively command the contrary; I was prepared, therefore, to leave Gondar the 27th of October 1770, and thought to get a few miles clear of the town, and then make a long ſtretch the next day. I had received my quadrant, time-keeper, and teleſcopes from the iſland of Mitraha, where I had placed them after the affair of Guebra Mehedin, and had now put them in the very beſt order.

BUT, about twelve o'clock, I was told a meſſage from Ras Michael had arrived with great news from Tigré. I went immediately to Koſcam as faſt as I could gallop, and found there Guebra Chriſtos, a man uſed to bring the jars of bouza to Ras Michael at his dinner and ſupper: low men are always employed on ſuch errands, that they may not, from their conſequence excite a deſire of vengeance. The meſſage that he brought was to order bread and beer to be ready for 30,000 men who were coming with the king, as he had juſt decamped from before the mountain Haramat, which he had taken, and put Za Menfus to the ſword, with every man that was in it: this meſſage ſtruck the queen with ſuch a terror that ſhe was not viſible the whole day.

After aſking the meſſenger if he had any word from the king to me, he ſaid, "Very little;" that the king had called him to tell me he ſhould ſoon begin his march by Beleſſen; and that he would ſend for me to meet him when he ſhould arrive at Mariam-Ohha; he told me beſides, that the king had got a ſtone for me with writing upon it of old times, which he was bringing to me; that it had been dug up at Axum, and was ſtanding at the foot of his bed, but that he did not order him to tell me this, and had only learned it from the ſervants. My curioſity was very much raiſed to know what this ſtone could be, but I ſoon ſaw it was in vain to endeavour to learn any thing from Guebra Chriſtos; he anſwered in the affirmative to every inquiry: when I aſked if it was blue, it was blue; and if black, it was black; it was round, and ſquare, and oblong, juſt as I put my queſtion to him: all he knew about it at laſt, he ſaid, was, that it cured all ſort of ſickneſs; and, if a man uſed it properly, it made him invulnerable and immortal: he did not, however, pretend to warrant this himſelf, but ſwore he had the account from a prieſt of Axum who knew it. I was perfectly ſatisfied all further inquiry was unneceſſary; he had got a very plentiful portion of bouza from his friends, and was, I ſaw, faſt engaged in the purſuit of more, ſo I gave him a ſmall preſent for his good news, and took my leave, my mind being full of reflections upon the king's goodneſs, who, after ſuch an abſence, and in ſo critical a ſituation as he then was, ſtill remembered the trifling purſuits in which he had ſeen me often engaged.

In the afternoon I received a meſſage from Ozoro Eſther, as brought to her by a ſervant of Ras Michael. It ſeems the giving up the king's revenue due from Tigré, and all ſort of taxes upon the inhabitants, had intereſted the whole province ſo ſtrongly, that all of them, as one man, endeavoured to remove the obſtacle which ſtood in the way of the king's return: Michael, moreover, offered peace and pardon to the rebels, certain compenſations, and an amneſty of all that was paſt. All the friends, both of Netcho and Za Menfus, and the other leaders upon the mountain, endeavoured to perſuade them to accept the terms offered, whilſt all the prieſts and hermits, eminent for ſanctity, became as mediators between them and Ras Michael: this intercourſe, though it had no effect upon Za Menfus, had ſeduced Netcho, and opened a large field for treachery.

In the midſt of this treaty, Keſla Yaſous, with a detachment of choſen men, in a very ſtormy night, was appointed to aſcend up a private path to that part of the mountain where Netcho kept the principal guard, and being admitted, found the garriſon moſtly aſleep; he ſurpriſed and obliged them to ſurrender, with very little bloodſhed; Za Menfus was taken priſoner, and, while Keſla Yaſous conducted him to the camp, was met by Guebra Maſcal, who thruſt him through with a lance, as a retaliation for his father's death. Netcho and the reſt of the garriſon being pardoned, all joined Ras Michael's army. I looked upon theſe news as a good omen, and experienced a degree of confidence and compoſure of mind to which I for a long time had been a ſtranger. I ſlept ſound that night, and it was not till half after nine in the morning that I was ready for my journey.

In the evening before, I had endeavoured to engage my old companion Strates to accompany me on this attempt as he had done on the former; but the recollection of paſt dangers and ſufferings was not yet baniſhed from his mind; and upon my aſking him to go and ſee the head of this famous river, he coarſely, according to his ſtile, anſwered, Might the devil fetch him if ever he ſought either his head or his tail again.

It was on the 28th of October, at half paſt nine in the morning, that we left Gondar, and paſſed the river Kahha at the foot of the town; our route was W. S. W. the road a little rugged upon the ſide of a hill, but the day was fair, with ſunſhine; and a ſmall breeze from the north had riſen with the ſun, and made the temperature of the air perfectly agreeable. We left the church of Ledeta about a mile on the right, and paſſed by ſeveral poor villages called Abba Samuel; thence we came to the ſmall river Shimfa, then to the Dumaza, ſomething larger. Upon the banks of this river, very pleaſantly ſituated, is Azazo, a country-houſe built by the late king Yaſous, who often retired here to relax himſelf with his friends. It is ſurrounded, I may ſay covered, with orange-trees, ſo as to be ſcarcely ſeen; the trees are grown very large and high; they are planted without order, the only benefit expected from them being the ſhade. At ſome ſmall diſtance is the village Azazo, originally built for the accommodation of the king's ſervants while he reſided there, but now chiefly occupied by monks belonging to the large church of Tecla Haimanout, which is on a little hill adjoining. Azazo, though little, is one of the moſt chearful and pleaſant villages in the neighbourhood of Gondar. The lemon-tree ſeems to thrive better and grow higher than the orange; but the houſe itſelf is going faſt to ruin, as the kings of this country have a fixed averſion to houſes built by their predeceſſors.

The Dumaza is a very clear and pleaſant ſtream, running briſkly over a ſmall bed of pebbles: both this river and the Shimfa come from Woggora on the N. W. they paſs the hill of Koſcam, called Debra Tzai, join below Azazo, and, traverſing the flat country of Dembea, they meet the Angrab, which paſſes by Gondar, and with it fall into the Tacazzè, or Atbara.

At noon we paſſed a ſmall rivulet called Azzargiha, and, ſoon after, the Chergué, where there began a moſt violent ſtorm of rain, which forced us, much againſt our will, into the village, one of the moſt miſerable I ever entered; it conſiſted of ſmall hovels built with branches of trees, and covered with thatch of ſtraw. Theſe rains that fall in the latter ſeaſon are what the natives very much depend upon, and without which they could not ſow the latter crops; for, though it rains violently every day from May to the beginning of September, by the end of October the ground is ſo burnt that the country would be unfit for culture.

Our quarters here were ſo bad that we were impatient to depart, but came to a water juſt below Chergué, which quickly made us wiſh ourſelves back in the village; this is a torrent that has no ſprings in the hills, but only great baſons, or reſervoirs, of ſtone; and, though it is dry all the year elſe, yet, upon a ſudden, violent ſhower, as this was, it ſwells in an inſtant, ſo that it is impaſſable for man or horſe by any device whatever. This violence is of ſhort duration; we waited above half an hour, and then the peaſants ſhewed us a place, ſome hundred yards above, where it was ſhallower; but even here we paſſed with the utmoſt difficulty, from the impetuoſity of the ſtream, after getting all poſſible aſſiſtance from four people of the village; but we ſtood very much in need of ſome check to our impatience, ſo eager were we to get forward and finiſh our journey before ſome revolution happened.

We had not many minutes been delivered from this torrent, before we paſſed two other rivers, the one larger, the other ſmaller. All theſe rivers come from the north-weſt, and have their ſources in the mountains a few miles above, towards Woggora, from which, after a ſhort courſe on the ſide of the hills, they enter the low, flat country of Dembea, and are ſwallowed up in the Tzana.

We continued along the ſide of the hill in a country very thinly inhabited; for, it being directly in the march of the army, the peaſants naturally avoided it, or were driven from it. Our road was conſtantly interſected by rivers, which abound, in the ſame ſpace, more than in any other country in the world. We then came to the river Derma, the largeſt and moſt rapid we had yet met with, and ſoon after a ſmaller, called Ghelghel Derma. In the afternoon, at a quarter paſt three, we paſſed another river, called Gavi-Corra; theſe, like the others, all point as radii to the center of the lake, in which they empty themſelves. A little before four o'clock we encamped on the ſide of the river Kemona. Upon the hill, on the other ſide of the river, ſtands the village of that name; it was full of cattle, very few of which we had ſeen during the fore-part of the journey; we had all that day travelled ſix hours and a quarter, which we computed not to exceed 14 miles: the reaſon of this ſlowneſs was the weight of my quadrant, which, though divided into two, required four men to carry it, tied upon bamboo, as upon two chair-poles. The time-keeper and two teleſcopes employed two men more. We pitched our tent on the ſide of the river, oppoſite to the village, and there paſſed the night.

On the 29th of October, at ſeven in the morning, we left our ſtation, the river Kemona; our direction was W. S. W. after, about an hour, we came to a church called Abba Abraham, and a village that goes by the ſame name; it is immediately upon the road on the left hand. At the diſtance of about a mile are ten or twelve villages, all belonging to the Abuna, and called Ghendi, where many of his predeceſſors have been buried. The low, hot, unwholeſome, woody part of the Abyſſinian Kolla, and the feveriſh, barren province of Walkayt, lay at the diſtance of about fourteen or ſixteen miles on our right. We had been hitherto aſcending a gentle riſing-ground in a very indifferent country, the ſides of the hill being ſkirted with little rugged wood, and full of ſprings, which join as they run down to the low country of Walkayt. We ſaw before us a ſmall hill called Guarré, which is to the ſouth-weſt. At half paſt ten we reſted under the before-mentioned hill; it ſtands alone in the plain, in ſhape like a ſugar-loaf, and ſeems almoſt as regular as if it had been a work of art. At a quarter paſt eleven we reſumed our journey, our courſe always nearly weſt ſouth-weſt; we paſſed the ſmall village of Bowiha, at the diſtance of about a mile; and, on the left, about ſix miles, is Gorgora, a peninſula that runs into the lake Tzana for ſeveral miles.

There was one of the firſt and moſt magnificent churches and monaſteries of the Portugueſe Jeſuits, in the time of their miſſion to convert this country: Socinios, then king, gave them the grounds, with money for the expence; they built it with their own hands, and lined it elegantly with cedar. The king, who was a zealous Roman Catholic, choſe afterwards a country-houſe for himſelf there, and encouraged them much by his preſents and by his charity; it is one of the pleaſanteſt ſituations in the world; the vaſt expanſe of the lake is before you; Dembea, Gojam, and Maitſha, flat and rich countries all round, are in view; and the tops of the high hills of Begemder and Woggora cloſe the proſpect.

The lake here, I am told, has plenty of fiſh, which is more than can be ſaid for many of the other parts of it; the fiſh are of two kinds, both of them ſeemingly a ſpecies of what the Engliſh call *bream*. I never could make them to agree with me, which I attribute to the drug with which they are taken; it is of the nature of *nux vomica*, pounded in a morter, and thrown into ſtreams, where they run into the lake; the fiſh, feeding there, are thus intoxicated and taken; however, it would admit of a doubt of this being the reaſon,

ſon, becauſe the queen and all the great people in Gondar eat them in Lent without any bad conſequences.

The great elevation of the peninſula of Gorgora makes it one of the healthieſt, as well as beautiful parts of the country; for, out of this neck of land, at ſeveral different ſeaſons of the year, the inhabitants of the flat country ſuffer from malignant fevers. From Gondar hither we had always been edging down to the lake.

At a quarter before noon we halted to reſt upon the banks of a ſmall river called Baha; the country was rich, and cultivated; great part of it, too, was laid out in paſture, and ſtocked with an immenſe quantity of cattle. At one o'clock we reſumed our journey, going weſt ſouth-weſt as before; we were apparently turning the north end of the lake as ſhort as poſſible, to ſet our face due ſouth to the country of the Agows. At a quarter before three we pitched our tents at Bab Baha, after having travelled five hours and three quarters, which we computed to be equal to twelve miles. The firſt part of our journey this day was not like that of the day before; the road was, indeed, rough, but led through very agreeable valleys and gentle-riſing hills; it appeared, on the whole, however, that we had aſcended conſiderably ſince we left Gondar.

The country about Bab Baha is the richeſt in Abyſſinia; this on the ſouth, and Woggora on the north, are the two granaries that ſupply the reſt of the kingdom. Bab Baha is a parcel of ſmall villages, more conſiderable in number and ſtrength than thoſe at Kemona, and is near the lake Tzana. The queen and many of her relations have here their houſes and poſſeſſions, and theſe, therefore, being reſpected by Michael, had not been involved in the devaſtation of the late war. The villages are all ſurrounded with Kol-quall trees, as large at the trunk as thoſe we met on the ſide of the mountain of Taranta, when we aſcended it on our journey from Maſuah to enter into the province of Tigré; but the tree wants much of the beauty of thoſe of Tigré; the branches are fewer in number, leſs thorny, and leſs indented, which ſeems to prove that this is not the climate for them.

The 30th of October, at ſix in the morning, we continued our journey from Bab Baha ſtill rounding the lake at W. S. W. and on the very brink of it: the country here is all laid out in large meadows of a deep, black, rich ſoil, bearing very high graſs, through the midſt of which runs the river Sar-Ohha, which, in Engliſh, is the Graſſy River; it is about forty yards broad and not two feet deep, has a ſoft clay bottom, and runs from north to ſouth into the lake Tzana.

We turned out of the road to the left at Bab Baha, and were obliged to go up the hill; in a quarter of an hour we reached the high road to Meſcala Chriſtos. At ſeven o'clock we began to turn more to the ſouthward, our courſe being S. W.; three miles and a half on our right remained the village of Tenkel; and four miles and a half that of Tſhemmera to the N. N. W.; we were now cloſe to the border of the lake, whoſe bottom here is a fine ſand. Neither the fea of crocodiles, nor other monſters in this large lake, could hinder me from ſwimming in it for a few minutes.

Though the ſun was very warm, the water was intenſely cold, owing to the many freſh ſtreams that pour themſelves continually into the lake Tzana from the mountains. The country here is ſown with dora, which is maize, or millet; and another plant, not to be diſtinguiſhed from our marigold either in ſize, ſhape, or foliage; it is called Nook*, and furniſhes all Abyſſinia with oil for the kitchen, and other uſes.

At a quarter paſt nine we reſted a little at Delghi Mariam; the village called ſimply Delghi, adjoining to it, is but ſmall, and on the S. W. is the hill of Goy Mariam, where the queen-mother has a houſe. All the habitations in this country were burnt by Ras Michael in his return to Gondar after the battle of Fagitta. The mountain Debra Tzai above Koſcam, was ſeen this day at N. E. and by E. from us.

At a quarter paſt ten we again ſet out, our route being S. W. at eleven we left the ſmall village Arrico, about two miles on our right. At a quarter paſt eleven we halted to reſt our men; we paſſed the church of St Michael on our right, and at a quarter paſt one we paſſed two ſmall iſlands in the lake, called Kedami Aret; and, half an hour after, we paſſed a ſmall river, and came to Meſcala Chriſtos, a large village upon a high mountain, the ſummit of which it occupies entirely; it is ſurrounded on both ſides by a river, and the deſcent is ſteep and dangerous. We thought to have ſtaid here all night; but, after mounting the hill with great fatigue and trouble, we found the whole village abandoned, on intelligence that Waragna Faſil was on his march to Gondar, and not far diſtant.

---

* Polymnia frondoſa.

This intelligence, which came all at once upon us, made us lay aſide the thoughts of ſleeping that night; we deſcended the hill of Meſcala Chriſtos in great haſte, and with much difficulty, and came to the river Kemon below it, clear and limpid, but having little water, running over a bed of very large ſtones. This river, too, comes from the north-weſt, and falls into the lake a little below; we reſted on its banks half an hour, the weather being very ſultry; from this place we had a diſtinct view of the Nile, where, after croſſing the lake, it iſſues out near Dara, the ſcene of our former misfortunes; we ſet it carefully by the compaſs, and it bore nearly S. W.

We began our journey again at three quarters after two, and at half after three we paſſed a river, very clear, with little water, the name of which I have forgot; by the largeneſs of its bed it ſeemed to be a very conſiderable ſtream in winter; at preſent it had very little water, but a fine gravelly bottom; here we met multitudes of peaſants flying before the army of Faſil, many of whom, ſeeing us, turned out of the way; one of theſe was a ſervant of Guebra Ehud, brother to Ayto Aylo, my moſt intimate friend: he told us it was very poſſible that Faſil would paſs us that night, adviſed us not to linger in the front of ſuch an army, but fall in as ſoon as poſſible with his Fit-Auraris, rather than any other of his advanced poſts; he was carrying a meſſage to his maſter's brother at Gondar. I told him I had rather linger in the front of ſuch an army than in the rear of it, and ſhould be very ſorry to be detained long, even in the middle of it; that I only wiſhed to ſalute Faſil, and procure a paſs and recommendations from him to Agow Midre.

Ayto Aylo's ſervant, who was with me, preſently made acquaintance with this man, and I truſted him to learn from him as much as he knew about Faſil; the reſult was, that Faſil pretended to be in a violent hurry, from what motive was not known; but that he, at the ſame time, marched very ſlowly, contrary to his uſual cuſtom; that his ſpeech and behaviour promiſed peace, and that he had hurt nobody on the way, but proclaimed conſtantly, that all people ſhould keep their houſes without fear; that Ayto Woldo of Maitſha, a great robber, was his Fit-Auraris, and never diſtant from him more than three miles; that the troops of Agow, Maitſha, and Damot, were with him, and with ſome Galla of Gojam and Metchakel compoſed the van and center of his army, whilſt his rear conſiſted of wild lawleſs Galla, whom he had brought from the other ſide of the Nile from Bizamo, his own country, and were commanded by Ayto Welleta Yaſous, his great confident; that theſe Galla were half a day generally behind him, and there was ſome talk that, the ſame day, or the next, he was to ſend theſe invaders home; that he marched as if he was in fear; always took ſtrong poſts, but had received every body that came to him, either from the country or Gondar, affably and kindly enough, but no one knew any thing of his intentions.

About half paſt four o'clock we fell in with Woldo, his Fit-Auraris, whom I did not know. Ayto Aylo's ſervant, however, was acquainted with him; we aſked him ſome queſtions about his maſter, which he anſwered very candidly and diſcreetly; on his part he made no inquiry, and ſeemed to have little curioſity about us; he had taken his poſt, and was advancing no farther that night. I made him a little preſent at taking my leave, which he ſeemed ſurpriſed at; and, very much contrary to my expectations, had ſome difficulty about receiving, ſaying, he was aſhamed that he had not any return for us; that he was a ſoldier, and had nothing but the lance in his hand and the goat's ſkin on his ſhoulders, neither of which he could be ſure to poſſeſs for twenty-four hours; he then told us that Faſil had, by that time, pitched his tent at Bamba, within a mile of us, and was to diſpatch the wild Galla from thence to their own country: he gave us a man who, he ſaid, would take care of us, and deſired us not to diſmiſs him till we had ſeen Faſil, and not to pitch our tent, but rather to go into one of the empty houſes of Bamba, as all the people had fled. We now parted equally contented with each other; at the ſame time I ſaw he ſent off another man, who went ſwiftly on, probably to carry advice of us to Faſil: we had ſtaid with him ſomething leſs than half an hour.

CHAP. IX.

Interview with Faſil—Tranſactions in the Camp.

WE found Bamba a collection of villages, in a valley now filled with ſoldiers. We went to the left with our guide, and got a tolerable houſe, but the door had been carried away. Faſil's tent was pitched a little below us, larger than the others, but without further diſtinction: it was eaſily known, however, by the lights about it, and by the nagareet, which ſtill continued beating: he was then juſt alighting from his horſe. I immediately ſent Ayto Aylo's ſervant, whom I had with me, to preſent my compliments, and acquaint him of my being on the road to viſit him. I thought now all my difficulties were over: for I knew it was in his power to forward us to our journey's end; and his ſervants, whom I ſaw at the palace near the king, when Faſil was inveſted with his command, had aſſured me, not only of an effectual protection, but alſo of a magnificent reception if I chanced to find him in Maitſha.

It was now, however, near eight at night of the 30th before I received a meſſage to attend him. I repaired immediately to his tent. After announcing myſelf, I waited about a quarter of an hour before I was admitted; he was ſitting upon a cuſhion with a lion's ſkin upon it, and another ſtretched like a carpet before his feet, and had a cotton cloth, ſomething like a dirty towel, wrapped about his head; his upper cloak, or garment, was drawn tight about him over his neck and ſhoulders, ſo as to cover his hands; I bowed, and went forward to kiſs one of them, but it was ſo entangled in the cloth that I was obliged to kiſs the cloth inſtead of the hand. This was done either as not expecting I ſhould pay him that compliment, (as I certainly ſhould not have done, being one of the king's ſervants, if the king had been at Gondar) or elſe it was intended for a mark of diſreſpect, which was very much of a-piece with the reſt of his behaviour afterwards.

There was no carpet or cuſhions in the tent, and only a little ſtraw, as if accidentally, thrown thinly about it. I ſat down upon the ground, thinking him ſick not knowing what all this meant; he looked ſtedfaſtly at me, ſaying, half under his breath, Endett nawi? bogo nawi? which, in Amharic, is, How do you do? Are you very well? I made the uſual anſwer, Well, thank God. He again ſtopt, as for me to ſpeak; there was only one old man preſent, who was ſitting on the floor mending a mule's bridle. I took him at firſt for an attendant, but obſerving that a ſervant uncovered held a candle to him, I thought he was one of his Galla, but then I ſaw a blue ſilk thread, which he had about his neck, which is a badge of Chriſtianity all over Abyſſinia, and which a Galla would not wear. What he was I could not make out; he ſeemed, however, to be a very bad cobler, and took no notice of us.

Ayto Aylo's ſervant, who ſtood behind me, puſhed me with his knee, as a ſign that I ſhould ſpeak, which I accordingly began to do with ſome difficulty. "I am come, ſaid I, by your invitation, and the king's leave, to pay my reſpects to you in your own government, begging that you would favour my curioſity ſo far as to ſuffer me to ſee the country of the Agows, and the ſource of the Abay, or Nile, part of which I have ſeen in Egypt." "The ſource of the Abay! exclaimed he, with a pretended ſurpriſe, do you know what you are ſaying? Why, it is, God knows where, in the country of the Galla, wild, terrible people. The ſource of the Abay! Are you raving! repeats he again: Are you to get there, do you think, in a twelvemonth, or more, or when?" "Sir, ſaid I, the king told me it was near Sacala, and ſtill nearer Geeſh; both villages of the Agows, and both in your government." "And ſo you know Sacala and Geeſh? ſays he, whiſtling and half angry*." "I can repeat the names that I hear, ſaid I; all Abyſſinia knows the head of the Nile."—"Aye, ſays he, imitating my voice and manner, but all Abyſſinia won't carry you there, that I promiſe you." "If you are reſolved to the contrary, ſaid I, they will not; I wiſh you had told the king ſo in time, then I ſhould not have attempted it; it was relying upon you alone I came ſo far, confident, if all the reſt of Abyſſinia could not protect me there, that your word ſingly could do it."

---

* This affected ignorance was probably intended to bring me to mention the donation the king had given me of Geeſh, which he never much reliſhed, and made effectually uſeleſs to me.

He now put on a look of more complacency. "Look you, Yagoube, ſays he, it is true I can do it; and, for the king's ſake who recommended it to me, I would do it; but the Acab Saat, Abba Salama, has ſent to me, to deſire me not to let you paſs further; he ſays it is againſt the law of the land to permit Franks like you to go about the country, and that he has dreamed ſomething ill will befal me if you go into Maitſha." I was as much irritated as I thought it poſſible for me to be. "So ſo, ſaid I, the time of prieſts, prophets, and dreamers is coming on again." "I underſtand you, ſays he laughing for the firſt time; I care as little for prieſts as Michael does, and for prophets too, but I would have you conſider the men of this country are not like yours; a boy of theſe Galla would think nothing of killing a man of your country. You white people are all effeminate; you are like ſo many women; you are not fit for going into a province where all is war, and inhabited by men, warriors from their cradle."

I saw he intended to provoke me; and he had ſucceeded ſo effectually that I ſhould have died, I believe, imprudent as it was, if I had not told him my mind in reply. "Sir, ſaid I, I have paſſed through many of the moſt barbarous nations in the world; all of them, excepting this clan of yours, have ſome great men among them above uſing a defenceleſs ſtranger ill. But the worſt and loweſt individual among the moſt uncivilized people never treated me as you have done to-day under your own roof, where I have come ſo far for protection." He aſked, "How?" "You have, in the firſt place, ſaid I, publicly called me Frank, the moſt odious name in this country, and ſufficient to occaſion me to be ſtoned to death without further ceremony, by any ſet of men wherever I may preſent myſelf. By Frank you mean one of the Romiſh religion, to which my nation is as adverſe as yours; and again, without having ever ſeen any of my countrymen but myſelf, you have diſcovered, from that ſpecimen, that we are all cowards and effeminate people, like, or inferior to, your boys or women. Look you, Sir, you never heard that I gave myſelf out as more than an ordinary man in my own country, far leſs to be a pattern of what is excellent in it. I am no ſoldier, though I know enough of war to ſee yours are poor proficients in that trade. But there are ſoldiers, friends and countrymen of mine, (one preſents himſelf to my mind at this inſtant*,) who would not think it an action in his life to vaunt of, that with 500 men he had trampled all yon naked ſavages into duſt. On this Faſil made a feigned laugh, and ſeemed rather to take my freedom amiſs. It was, doubtleſs, a paſſionate and raſh ſpeech. As to myſelf, continued I, unſkilled in war as I am, could it be now without further conſequence, let me but be armed in my own country-faſhion on horſeback, as I was yeſterday, I ſhould, without thinking myſelf overmatched, fight the two beſt horſemen you ſhall chooſe from this your army of famous men, who are warriors from their cradle; and if, when the king arrives, you are not returned to your duty, and we meet again, as we did at Limjour, I will pledge myſelf, with his permiſſion, to put you in mind of this promiſe. This did not make things better.

He repeated the word *duty* after me, and would have replied, but my noſe burſt out in a ſtream of blood; and, that

inſtant,

---

* It is with pleaſure I confeſs the man then in my mind was my brave friend Sir William Erſkine.

inſtant, Aylo's ſervant took hold of me by the ſhoulder to hurry me out of the tent. Faſil ſeemed to be a good deal concerned, for the blood ſtreamed out upon my clothes. The old man likewiſe aſſiſted me when out of the tent; I found he was Guebra Ehud, Ayto Aylo's brother, whoſe ſervant we had met on the road. I returned then to my tent, and the blood was ſoon ſtaunched by waſhing my face with cold water. I ſat down to recollect myſelf, and the more I calmed, the more I was diſſatisfied at being put off my guard; but it is impoſſible to conceive the provocation without having proved it. I have felt but too often how much the love of our native ſoil increaſes by our abſence from it; and how jealous we are of compariſons made to the diſadvantage of our countrymen by people who, all proper allowances being made, are generally not their equals, when they would boaſt themſelves their ſuperiors. I will confeſs further, in gratification to my critics, that I was, from my infancy, of a ſanguine, paſſionate diſpoſition; very ſenſible of injuries that I had neither provoked nor deſerved; but much reflection, from very early life, continual habits of ſuffering in long and dangerous travels, where nothing but patience would do, had, I flattered myſelf, abundantly ſubdued my natural proneneſs to feel offences, which, common ſenſe might teach me, I could only revenge upon myſelf.

HOWEVER, upon further conſulting my own breaſt, I found there was another cauſe had co-operated ſtrongly with the former in making me loſe my temper at this time, which, upon much greater provocation, I had never done before. I found now, as I thought, that it was decreed deciſively my hopes of arriving at the ſource of the Nile were for ever ended; all my trouble, all my expences, all my time, and all my ſufferings for ſo many years were thrown away, from no greater obſtacle than the whimſies of one barbarian, whoſe good inclinations, I thought, I had long before ſufficiently ſecured; and, what was worſe, I was now got within leſs than forty miles of the place I ſo much wiſhed to ſee; and my hopes were ſhipwrecked upon the laſt, as well as the moſt unexpected, difficulty I had to encounter.

I was juſt going to bed when Ayto Welleta Michael, Ras Michael's nephew, taken at Limjour, and a priſoner with Faſil, though now at large, came into the tent. I need not repeat the diſcourſe that paſſed between us, it was all condolence upon the ill-uſage I had met with. He curſed Faſil, called him a thouſand opprobrious names, and ſaid, Ras Michael one day would ſhew me his head upon a pole: he hinted, that he thought Faſil expected a preſent, and imagined that I intended to paſs the king's recommendation on him in the place of it. I have a preſent, ſaid I, and a very handſome one, but I never thought that, while his nagareet was ſtill beating, and when he had ſcarcely pitched his tent when he was tired, and I no leſs ſo, that it was then a time to open baggage for this purpoſe; if he had waited till to-morrow, he ſhould have had a gratification which would have contented him.

Well, well, ſaid Welleta Michael, as for your journey I ſhall undertake for that, for I heard him giving orders about it when I came away, even though he expects no preſent; what does the gratifying your curioſity coſt him? he would be aſhamed to refuſe you permiſſion; his own vanity would hinder him. This aſſurance, more than all the quieting draughts in the world, compoſed my mind, and brought me to myſelf. I went to bed, and falling into a ſound ſleep, was waked near mid-night by two of Faſil's ſervants, who brought each of them a lean live ſheep; they ſaid they had brought the ſheep, and were come to aſk how I was, and to ſtay all night to watch the houſe for fear of the thieves in the army; they likewiſe brought their maſter's order for me to come early in the morning to him, as he wanted to diſpatch me on my journey before he gave the Galla liberty to return. This diſpelled every doubt, but it raiſed my ſpirits ſo much, that, out of impatience for morning, I ſlept very little more that night.

It was a time of year when it is not broad day till after ſix o'clock; I went to the camp and ſaw Guebra Ehud, who confirmed what Welleta Michael had ſaid, and that Faſil had given orders for bringing ſeveral of his own horſes for me, to chooſe which he was to preſent me with; in effect there were about twelve horſes all ſaddled and bridled, which were led by a maſter-groom. I was very indifferent about theſe horſes, having a good one of my own, and there was none of theſe that would in this country have brought 7l. at a market; the ſervant, who ſeemed very officious, pitched upon a bright-bay poney, the fatteſt of the whole, but not ſtrong enough in appearance to carry me; he aſſured me, however, the horſe had excellent paces, was a great favourite of Faſil's, but too *dull* and *quiet* for him, and deſired me to mount him, though he had no other furniture but the wooden part of a ſaddle covered with thin, brown leather, and, inſtead of ſtirrups, iron rings. All the Abyſſinians, indeed, ride bare-footed and legged, and put only their great toe into the iron ring, holding it betwixt their great and ſecond toe, as they are afraid of being entangled by the ſtirrup if their horſe falls, ſhould they put their foot into it.

I CONSENTED to try him very willingly. A long experience with the Moors in Barbary put me above fear of any horſe, however vicious, which I had no reaſon to think this was; beſides, I rode always with a Barbary bridle, broad ſtirrups, and ſhort ſtirrup-leathers, after their faſhion; the bridle is known to every ſcholar in horſemanſhip, and ſhould be uſed by every light-horſeman or dragoon, for the moſt vicious horſe cannot advance a yard againſt this bridle, when in a ſtrong hand. I ordered the ſeis, or groom, to change the ſaddle and bridle for mine, and I had on a pair of ſpurs with very long and ſharp rowels. I ſaw preſently the horſe did not like the bit, but that I did not wonder at; my ſaddle was what is called a war ſaddle, high behind and before, ſo, unleſs the horſe fell, it was impoſſible to throw the rider. I had alſo a thick, knotty ſtick, or truncheon, of about three feet long, inſtead of a whip, and well was it for me I was ſo prepared for him.

FOR the firſt two minutes after I mounted I do not know whether I was moſt on the earth or in the air; he kicked behind, reared before, leaped like a deer, all four off the ground, and it was ſome time before I recollected myſelf; he then attempted to gallop, taking the bridle in his teeth, but got a check which ſtaggered him; he, however, continued to gallop; and, finding I ſlacked the bridle on his neck, and that he was at eaſe, he ſet off and ran away as hard as he could, flinging out behind every ten yards; the ground was very favourable, ſmooth, ſoft, and up-hill.

We paſſed the poſt of the Fit-Auraris like lightning, leaving him exceedingly ſurpriſed at ſeeing me make off with his maſter's horſe. He was then going to the head-quarters, but ſaid nothing at paſſing; we went down one hill aukwardly enough; and, when we got to a ſmall plain and a brook below, the horſe would have gone eaſily enough either a trot or walk up the other, but I had only to ſhake my ſtirrups to make him ſet off again at a violent gallop, and when he ſtopt he trembled all over. I was now reſolved to gain a victory, and hung my upper cloak upon a tree, the attempting which occaſioned a new battle; but he was obliged to ſubmit. I then between the two hills, half up the one and half up the other, wrought him ſo that he had no longer either breath or ſtrength, and I began to think he would ſcarce carry me to the camp.

I NOW found that he would walk very quietly; that a gentle touch of the ſpur would quicken him, but that he had not ſtrength or inclination to gallop; and there was no more rearing or kicking up behind. I put my cloak, therefore, about me in the beſt manner poſſible, juſt as if it had never been ruffled or diſcompoſed by motion, and in this manner repaſſing the Fit-Auraris' quarters, came in ſight of the camp, where a large field ſown with teff, and much watered, was in front. I went out of the road into this field, which I knew was very ſoft and deep, and therefore favourable for me. Coming near Faſil's tent, the horſe ſtopt upon gently ſtraitening the bridle, as a horſe properly broke would have done, on which my ſervant took the ſaddle and bridle, and returned the groom his own.

The poor beaſt made a ſad figure, cut in the ſides to pieces and bleeding at the jaws; and the feis, the raſcal that put me upon him, being there when I diſmounted, he held up his hands upon ſeeing the horſe ſo mangled, and began to teſtify great ſurpriſe upon the ſuppoſed harm I had done. I took no notice of this, only ſaid, Carry that horſe to your maſter; he may venture to ride him now, which is more than either he or you dared to have done in the morning.

As my own horſe was bridled and ſaddled, and I found myſelf violently irritated, I reſolved to ride to compoſe myſelf a little before another interview, for I thought this laſt piece of treachery, that might have coſt me my legs and arms, was worſe than what paſſed in the tent the night before; it ſeemed to be aimed at my life, and to put a very effectual ſtop to the continuing my journey. My ſervant had in his hand a ſhort double-barrelled gun loaded with ſhot for killing any uncommon bird we might ſee by the way. I took the gun and my horſe, and went up the ſide of the green hill about half way, in fair view of the camp, and conſiderably above it, I galloped, trotted, and made my horſe perform every thing he was capable of. He was excellent in his movements, and very ſufficiently trained; this the Galla beheld at once with aſtoniſhment and pleaſure; they are naturally fond of horſes, ſufficiently perfect in the uſeful part of horſemanſhip, to be ſenſible of the beauty of the ornamental.

There was then, as there always is, a vaſt number of kites following the camp, which are quite familiar and live upon the carrion; chooſing two gliding near me, I ſhot firſt one on the right, then one on the left; they both fell dead on the ground; a great ſhout immediately followed from the ſpectators below, to which I ſeemingly paid no attention, pretending abſolute indifference, as if nothing extraordinary had been done. I then diſmounted from my horſe, giving him and my gun to my ſervant, and, ſitting down on a large ſtone, I began to apply ſome white paper to ſtaunch a ſmall ſcratch the firſt horſe had given me on the leg, by rubbing it againſt a thorn tree: as my trowſers, indeed, were all ſtained with the blood of the firſt horſe, much cut by the ſpur, it was generally thought I was wounded.

Fasil on this ſent for me to come immediately to him, having juſt got up from a ſleep after a whole night's debauch. He was at the door of the tent when I began riding my own horſe, and, having ſeen the ſhots, ordered the kites immediately to be brought him: his ſervants had laboured in vain to find the hole where the ball, with which I had killed the birds, had entered; for none of them had ever ſeen ſmall-ſhot, and I did not undeceive them. I had no ſooner entered his tent than he aſked me, with great earneſtneſs, to ſhew him where the ball had gone through. I gave him no explanation; but, if you have really an inclination to kill me, ſaid I, you had better do it here, where I have ſervants that will bury me, and tell the King and the Iteghé the kind reception you have given ſtrangers whom they have recommended. He aſked what I meant? What was the matter now? and I was going to anſwer, when Welleta Michael told him the whole ſtory, greatly in my favour, indeed, but truly and plainly as to the trick about the horſe. The Fit-Auraris Woldo ſaid ſomething to him in Galla, which plainly made the matter worſe. Faſil now ſeemed in

a ter-a terrible fury, and ſaid three words to the Fit-Auraris in Galla, who immediately went out; and, as my ſervants told me afterwards, after ſending for the ſeis, or groom, who had brought me the horſe, the firſt ſalutation that he gave him was a blow over the head with a bludgeon, which felled him to the ground, then a dozen more ſtrokes, and ordered him to be put in irons, after which he returned into the tent.

Fasil, who heard I was hurt, and ſaw the quantity of blood upon my trowſers, held up his hands with a ſhew of horror and concern, which plainly was not counterfeited; he proteſted, by every oath he could deviſe, that he knew nothing about the matter, and was aſleep at the time; that he had no horſes with him worth my acceptance, except the one that he rode, but that any horſe known to be his, driven before me, would be a paſſport, and procure me reſpect among all the wild people whom I might meet, and for that reaſon only he had thought of giving me a horſe. He repeated his proteſtations that he was innocent, and heartily ſorry for the accident, which, indeed, he appeared to be: he told me the groom was in irons, and that, before many hours paſſed, he would put him to death. I was perfectly ſatisfied with his ſincerity. I wiſhed to put an end to this diſagreeable converſation: "Sir, ſaid I, as this man has attempted my life, according to the laws of the country, it is I that ſhould name the puniſhment." "It is very true, replied Faſil, take him, Yagoube, and cut him in a thouſand pieces, if you pleaſe, and give his body to the kites." "Are you really ſincere in what you ſay, ſaid I, and will you have no after excuſes." He ſwore ſolemnly he would not. "Then, ſaid I, I am a Chriſtian: the way my religion teaches me to puniſh my enemies is by doing good for evil; and therefore I keep you to the oath you have ſworn, and deſire my friend the Fit-Auraris to ſet the man at liberty, and put him in the place he held before, for he has not been undutiful to you."

I NEED not ſay what were the ſentiments of the company upon the occaſion; they ſeemed to be moſt favourable to me; old Guebra Ehud could not contain himſelf, but got out of the dark corner, and ſqueezed both of my hands in his; and turning to Faſil, ſaid, "Did not I tell you what my brother Aylo thought about this man?" Welleta Michael ſaid, "He was juſt the ſame all through Tigrè." Faſil, in a low voice, replied, "A man that behaves as he does may go thro' any country." They then all begged that I would take care of my wound, looking at the blood upon my trowſers. I told them it was already ſtaunched; and turning to Faſil, ſaid, "We white people, you ſee, are not ſo terrified at ſeeing our own blood as you ſuppoſed we were." He then deſired that the tent might be cleared for a ſhort time, and we all went out.

ABOUT ten minutes after, I was called in to partake of a great breakfaſt; honey and butter, and raw beef in abundance, as alſo ſome ſtewed diſhes that were very good. I was very hungry, having taſted nothing ſince dinner the day before; and I had had much exerciſe of body as well as of mind. We were all very chearful, every one ſaying ſomething about the Agows, or of the Nile; and Faſil declaring, if it was peace, he would carry me to his country acroſs the Nile as far as the kingdom of Narea. I thanked him. "You are at peace, ſaid I, with the King and the Ras, and going to meet them at Gondar."—"At Gondar, ſays he, no; I hope not this time; the Ras has work enough on his hands for the reſt of his life." "What work? ſaid I." "Why, the mountain," replies he." "The mountain Aromata!" "The ſame, ſays he; you never ſaw ſuch a place; Lamalmon, and all the mountains of Abyſſinia, are nothing to it: he was, when at the prime of life, fifteen years in taking it from this Netcho's father." "But he has been luckier this time, replied I, by fourteen years." "How!" ſays he, with ſome amaſement." "Pardon me, ſaid I, if I have unawares told you unwelcome news; but the mountain is taken, the garriſon put to the ſword, and Za Menfus, after ſurrendering, ſlain, in cold blood by Guebra Maſcal, in revenge for the death of his father." Faſil had in his hand a blue cut-glaſs goblet, gilt round the edges with gold. I had bought it at Cairo, with ſeveral other articles of the ſame kind, from a merchant who procured them from Trieſte. I had given it to the king, who drank out of it himſelf, and had ſent it as an honourable token to Faſil from Dingleber, the day when they made peace, after the battle of Limjour. Upon hearing what I ſaid, he threw it violently upon the ground, and broke it into a thouſand pieces. "Take care what you ſay, Yagoube, ſays he, take care this be not a lie; tell it me again." I told him the whole circumſtances from beginning to end; how the news had come to the Iteghé—who had brought the intelligence—how it had come from the Ras to Ozoro Eſther—and how Keſla Yaſous had ſurpriſed the mountain by treachery, having firſt lulled the beſieged aſleep by a negociation, and a propoſed mediation of the prieſts and hermits. On this Faſil obſerved, it was the very way Michael took it laſt time; and, putting his forefinger in his mouth, bit it very hard, crying, Fool, fool, was he not warned? We all were again diſmiſſed from the tent, and ſtaid out about a quarter of an hour, when we were again called in.

I CANNOT ſay but I enjoyed heartily the fright I had viſibly given him; it ſeemed to me that Aylo's brother, Guebra Ehud, was the only perſon whom he conſulted, for it was he alone that remained with him in his tent when we entered; he had changed his dreſs; a man was combing his hair, and perfuming it; and he had a new, white, fine cotton cloth thrown about his middle looſely, which covered his legs and feet, his breaſts, neck, and ſhoulders, being quite naked; he roſe half up from his ſeat when I came in, made me ſit down on a cuſhion beſide him, and was going to ſpeak, when I reſolved to have the firſt word, for fear he ſhould engage me in more diſcuſſions. "Your continual hurry, ſaid I, all the times I have ſeen you, has put it out of my power till now to make you the acknowledgment it is ordinary for ſtrangers to preſent when they viſit great men in their own country, and aſk favours of them." I then took a napkin, and opened it before him; he ſeemed to have forgot the preſent altogether, but from that moment I ſaw his countenance changed, he was like another man. "O Yagoube, ſays he, a preſent to me! you ſhould be ſenſible that is perfectly needleſs; you were recommended to me by the King and the Ras; you know, ſays he, we are friends, and I would do twenty times as much for yourſelf, without recommendation from either; beſides, I have not behaved to you like a great man."

IT was not a very hard thing to conquer theſe ſcruples; he took the ſeveral pieces of the preſent one by one in his hands, and examined them; there was a crimſon ſilk ſaſh, made at Tunis, about five yards long, with a ſilk fringe of the ſame colour; it was as beautiful a web of ſilk as ever I ſaw; it had a ſmall waved pattern wrought in it; the next was a yellow, with a red narrow border, or ſtripe, and a ſilver-wrought fringe, but neither ſo long nor ſo thick as the other; the next were two Cyprus manufactured ſaſhes, ſilk and cotton, with a ſattin ſtripe, the one broader than the other, but five yards long each; the next was a Perſian pipe, with a long pliable tube, or worm, covered with Turkey leather, with an amber mouth-piece, and a chryſtal vaſe for ſmoking tobacco through water, a great luxury in the eaſtern countries; the next were two blue bowls, as fine as the one he had juſt then broken, and of the ſame ſort. He ſhoved them from him, laughing, and ſaid, "I will not take them from you, Yagoube; this is downright robbery; I have done nothing for this, which is a preſent for a king."—"It is a preſent to a friend, ſaid I, often of more conſequence to a ſtranger than a king; I always except your king, who is the ſtranger's beſt friend."—"Though he was not eaſily diſconcerted, he ſeemed, at this time, to be very nearly ſo."—"If you will not receive them, continued I, ſuch as they are offered, it is the greateſt affront ever was put upon me; I can never, you know, receive them again."

By this he was convinced. More feeble arguments would indeed have ſatisfied him, and he folded up the napkin with all the articles, and gave them to an officer; after which the tent was again cleared for conſultation; and, during this time, he had called his man of confidence, whom he was to ſend with us, and inſtructed him properly. I ſaw plainly that I had gained the aſcendant; and, in the expectation of Ras Michael's ſpeedily coming to Gondar, he was as willing to be on his journey the one way, as I was the other. I had ordered my ſervants and baggage to ſet out on the road to Dingleber before me, ſending Ayto Aylo's ſervant along with them, leaving me only my horſe and a common Abyſſinian ſervant to follow them: all had been ready ſince early in the morning, and they had ſet out accordingly with very great alacrity.

It was about one o'clock, or after it, when I was admitted to Faſil: he received me with great complacency, and would have had me ſit down on the ſame cuſhion with himſelf, which I declined. "Friend Yagoube, ſays he, I am heartily ſorry that you did not meet me at Buré before I ſet out; there I could have received you as I ought, but I have been tormented with a multitude of barbarous people, who have turned my head, and whom I am now about to diſmiſs. I go to Gondar in peace, and to keep peace there, for the king on this ſide the Tacazzé has no other friend than me; Powuſſen and Guſho are both traitors, and ſo Ras Michael knows them to be. I have nothing to return you for the preſent you have given me, for I did not expect to meet a man like you here in the fields; but you will quickly be back; we ſhall meet on better terms at Gondar; the head of the Nile is near at hand; a horſeman, expreſs, will arrive there in a day. I have given you a good man, well known in this country to be my ſervant; he will go to Geeſh with you, and return you to a friend of Ayto Aylo's and mine, Shalaka Welled Amlac; he has the dangerous part of the country wholly in his hands, and will carry you ſafe to Gondar; my wife is at preſent in his houſe: fear nothing, I ſhall anſwer for your ſafety: When will you ſet out? to-morrow?"

I **replied**, with many thanks for his kindneſs, that I wiſhed to proceed immediately, and that my ſervants were already far off, on the way. You are going to diſmiſs thoſe wild people, I would wiſh to be as clear of them as poſſible; I intend to travel long journies, till we part (as I underſtand we ſhall do) from the route that they are taking.

You are very much in the right, ſays Faſil, it was only in the idea that you was hurt with that accurſed horſe that I would have wiſhed you to ſtay till to-morrow; but throw off theſe bloody clothes, they are not decent, I muſt give you new ones, you are my vaſſal. I bowed. The king has granted you Geeſh, where you are going, and I muſt inveſt you. A number of his ſervants hurried me out; Guebra Ehud, Welleta Michael, and the Fit-Auraris, attended me. I preſently threw off my trowſers, and my two upper garments, and remained in my waiſtcoat; theſe were preſently replaced by new ones, and I was brought back in a minute to Faſil's tent, with only a fine looſe muſlin under garment or cloth round me, which reached to my feet. Upon my coming back to the tent, Faſil took off the one that he had put on himſelf new in the morning, and put it about my ſhoulders with his own hand, his ſervants throwing another immediately over him, ſaying at the ſame time to the people, "Bear witneſs, I give to you, Yagoube, the Agow Geeſh, as fully and freely as the king has given it me." I bowed and kiſſed his hand, as is cuſtomary for feudatories; and he then pointed to me to ſit down.

"**Hear** what I ſay to you, continued Faſil; I think it right for you to make the beſt of your way now, for you will be the ſooner back at Gondar. You need not be alarmed at the wild people you ſpeak of, who are going after you, tho' it is better to meet them coming this way, than when they are going to their homes; they are commanded by Welleta Yaſous, who is your friend, and is very grateful for the medicines you ſent him from Gondar: he has not been able to ſee you, being ſo much buſied with thoſe wild people; but he loves you, and will take care of you, and you muſt give me more of that phyſic when we meet at Gondar." I again bowed, and he continued,—"Hear me what I ſay; you ſee thoſe ſeven people (I never ſaw more thief-like fellows in my life),—theſe are all leaders and chiefs of the Galla—ſavages, if you pleaſe; they are all your brethren." I bowed. "You may go through their country as if it were your own, without a man hurting you; you will be ſoon related to them all; for it is their cuſtom that a ſtranger of diſtinction, like you, when he is their gueſt, ſleeps with the ſiſter, daughter, or near relation of the principal men among them. I dare ſay, adds he archly, you will not think the cuſtoms of the Galla contain greater hardſhips than thoſe of Amhara." I bowed, but thought to myſelf, I ſhall not put them to the trial. He then jabbered ſomething to them in Galla which I did not underſtand. They all anſwered by the wildeſt howl I ever heard, and ſtruck themſelves upon the breaſt, apparently aſſenting.

"When Ras Michael, continued he, came from the battle of Fagitta, the eyes of forty-four, brethren and relations of theſe people preſent, were pulled out at Gondar, the day after he arrived, and they were expoſed upon the banks of the river Angrab to ſtarve, where moſt, I believe, were devoured by the hyæna: you took three of them up to your houſe; nouriſhed, cloathed, protected, and kindly treated them." "They are now in good health, ſaid I, and want nothing: the Iteghé will deliver them to you. The only other thing I have done to them was, I got them baptiſed: I do not know if that will diſpleaſe them; I did it as an additional protection to them, and to give them a title to the charity of the people of Gondar." "As for that, ſays he, they don't care the leaſt about baptiſm; it will neither do them good nor harm; they don't trouble themſelves about theſe matters; give them meat and drink, and you will be very welcome to baptiſe them all from morning to night; after ſuch good care theſe Galla are all your brethren, they will die for you before they ſee you hurt." He then ſaid ſomething to them in Galla again, and they all gave another aſſent, and made a ſhew of kiſſing my hand.

They ſat down; and, I muſt own, if they entertained any good-will to me, it was not diſcernible in their countenances. "Beſides this, continued Faſil, you was very kind and courteous to my ſervants while at Gondar, and ſaid many favourable things of me before the king; you ſent me a preſent alſo, and above all, when Joas my maſter's body was dug up from the church-yard of St Raphael, and all Gondar were afraid to ſhew it the leaſt reſpect, dreading the vengeance of Ras Michael, you, a ſtranger, who had never ſeen him, nor received benefit from him, at your own expence paid that attention to his remains which would have better become many at Gondar, and me in particular, had I been within reach, or had intelligence of the matter: now, before all theſe men, aſk me any thing you have at heart, and, be it what it may, they know I cannot deny it you." He delivered this in a tone and gracefulneſs of manner, ſuperior, I think, to any thing I had ever before ſeen, although the Abyſſinians are all orators, as, indeed, are moſt barbarians.

"Why then, ſaid I, by all thoſe obligations you are pleaſed to mention, of which you have made a recital ſo truly honourable to me, I aſk you the greateſt favour that man can beſtow upon me—ſend me, as conveniently as poſſible, to the head of the Nile, and return me and my attendants in ſafety, after having diſpatched me quickly, and put me under no conſtraint that may prevent me from ſatisfying my curioſity in my own way." "This, ſays he, is no requeſt, I have granted it already; beſides, I owe it to the commands of the King, whoſe ſervant I am. Since, however, it is ſo much at your heart, go in peace, I will provide you with all neceſſaries. If I am alive, and governor of Damot, as you are, we all know, a prudent and ſenſible man, unſettled as the ſtate of the country is, nothing diſagreeable can befal you.

He then turned again to his ſeven chiefs, who all got up, himſelf and I, Guebra Ehud, Welleta Michael, and the Fit-Auraris; we all ſtood round in a circle, and raiſed the palm of our hands, while he and his Galla together repeated a prayer about a minute long; the Galla ſeemingly with great devotion. Now, ſays Faſil, go in peace, you are a Galla; this is a curſe upon them, and their children, their corn, graſs, and cattle, if ever they lift their hand againſt you or yours, or do not defend you to the utmoſt, if attacked by others, or endeavour to defeat any deſign they may hear is intended againſt you." Upon this I offered to kiſs his hand before I took my leave, and we all went to the door of the tent, where there was a very handſome grey horſe bridled and ſaddled. "Take this horſe, ſays Faſil, as a preſent from me; it is not ſo good as your own, but, depend upon it, it is not of the kind that raſcal gave you in the morning; it is the horſe which I rode upon yeſterday, when I came here to encamp; but do not mount it yourſelf, drive it before you ſaddled and bridled as it is; no man of Maitſha will touch you when he ſees that horſe; it is the people of Maitſha whoſe houſes Michael has burnt that you have to fear, and not your friends the Galla.

I THEN took the moſt humble and reſpectful leave of him poſſible, and alſo of my new-acquired brethren the Galla, praying inwardly I might never ſee them again. I recommended myſelf familiarly and affectionately to the remembrance of Welleta Michael, the Ras's nephew, as well as Guebra Ehud; and turning to Faſil, according to the cuſtom of the country to ſuperiors, aſked him leave to mount on horſeback before him, and was ſpeedily out of ſight. Shalaka Woldo (the name of my guide) did not ſet out with me, being employed about ſome affairs of his own, but he preſently after followed, driving Faſil's horſe before him.

CHAP. X.

Leave Bamba, and continue our Journey ſouthward—Fall in with Faſil's Pagan Galla—Encamp on the Kelti.

AT Bamba begins a valley full of ſmall hills and trees, all bruſh-wood, none of them high enough for timber. On the right hand of the valley the hills ſlope gently up, the ground is firm, and graſs ſhort like ſheep paſture; the hills on the left are ſteeper and more craggy, the lower part of the valley had been cleared of wood, and ſown with different ſorts of grain, by the induſtry of the inhabitants of the village of that name—induſtry that had ſerved them to very little purpoſe, as the encampment of this wild army deſtroyed in one night every veſtige of culture they had beſtowed upon it.

Shalaka Woldo was not, to all appearance, a man to protect a ſtranger in the middle of a retreating army, diſbanded as this was, and returning to very diſtant countries, perhaps never to be aſſembled again; yet this man was choſen by one that perfectly knew he was above all others capable of the truſt he had repoſed in him; he was about 55 years of age, was by birth an Agow, and had ſerved Faſil's father from his infancy, when Kaſmati Eſhté ſucceeded to the government of Damot, upon old Faſil's death *; he had been his ſervant likewiſe, as had young Faſil, ſo they were both at one time fellow-domeſtics of Kaſmati Eſhté.

When Faſil had ſlain this nobleman, and ſucceeded to his father's government of Damot, Shalaka Woldo was taken into his ſervice as an old ſervant of his father; it ſeemed his merit had not entitled him to further advancement; he had no covering on his head, except long, buſhy, black hair, which juſt began to be mingled with grey, but no beard, the defect of all his countrymen. He had a cotton cloth thrown about his ſhoulders in many different forms, occaſionally as his fancy ſuggeſted to him; but, unleſs at night, laid it generally upon one of the mules, and walked himſelf, his body naked, his ſhoulders only covered with a goat's ſkin in form of what the women call a tippet; he had alſo a pair of coarſe cotton trowſers that reached to the middle of his thigh, and theſe were faſtened at the waiſtband by a coarſe cotton ſaſh, or girdle, which went ſix or ſeven times about his waiſt, and in which he ſtuck a crooked knife, the blade about ten inches long, and three inches where broadeſt, which was the only weapon he wore, and ſerved him to cut his meat, rather than for any wea-

pon

---

* The perſon here called old Faſil, is Kaſmati Waragna, in the time of Yaſous II.

pon of offence or defence; for a man of conſequence, as he was, could not ſuppoſe a poſſibility of danger while he was in the territory of his maſter. Sometimes he had a long pipe in his hand, being a great ſmoker; at other times, a ſtick of about three feet long, ſomething thicker than one's thumb, with which he dealt about him very liberally, either to man, woman, or beaſt, upon the ſlighteſt provocation; he was bare-legged and footed, and without any mule, but kept up with us eaſily at whatever pace we went. With all this he was exceedingly ſagacious and cunning, and ſeemed to penetrate the meaning of our diſcourſe, though ſpoke in a language of which he did not underſtand a ſyllable.

As for Shalaka Welled Amlac, he was a man whom I ſhall hereafter mention as having been recommended to me by Ayto Aylo ſoon after my coming to Gondar. I did not, however, chooſe to let Faſil know of this connection, for fear he might lead him to ſome gainful impoſition for his own account in the courſe of my journey through Maitſha.

At a quarter paſt two o'clock of the 31ſt of October we halted for a little on the banks of the river Chergué, a ſmall and not very rapid ſtream, which coming from the ſouth-weſt, runs N. E. and loſes itſelf in the lake Tzana. At three o'clock in the afternoon we paſſed the ſmall river of Dingleber, and in a quarter of an hour after came to a village of that name ſituated upon the top of a rock, which we aſcended; here the road comes cloſe to the end of the lake, and between it and the rock is a very narrow paſs through which all proviſions from the Agows and Maitſha muſt go; when, therefore, there is any diſturbance in the ſouth part of the kingdom, this paſs is always occupied to reduce Gondar to famine.

The village itſelf belongs to the office of Betwudet, and; ſince that office has been diſcontinued, it makes part of the revenue of the Ras; the language here is Falaſha, though only uſed now by the Jews who go by that name: it was anciently the language of all the province of Dembea, which has here its ſouthern boundary. The air of Dingleber is excellent, and the proſpect one of the moſt beautiful in Abyſſinia; on the one ſide you have a diſtinct view of the lake Tzana and all its iſlands; on the north, the peninſula of Gorgora, the former reſidence of the Jeſuits, where too are the ruins of the king's palace. On the north of the lake you have a diſtant proſpect of Dara, and of the Nile croſſing that lake, preſerving diſtinctly the tract of its ſtream unmixed with the reſt of the water, and iſſuing out to form what is called the ſecond cataract at Alata, all places fixed in our mind by the memory of former diſtreſſes. On the ſouth-eaſt, we have a diſtant view of the flat country of Maitſha, for the moſt part covered with thick trees, and black like a foreſt; farther on the territory of Sacala, one of the diſtricts of the Agows, near which are the fountains of the Nile, the object of all my wiſhes; and cloſe behind this, the high mountains of Amid Amid, which ſurrounded them in two ſemicircles like a new moon, or amphitheatre, and ſeem by their ſhape to deſerve the name of mountains of the moon, ſuch as was given by antiquity to mountains, in the neighbourhood of which the Nile was ſuppoſed to riſe.

At Dingleber I overtook my ſervants, who were diſpoſed to ſtop there for that night. They had been very much oppreſſed by troops of wild Galla, who never having ſeen white men, could not refrain indulging a troubleſome curioſity, without indeed doing any harm, or ſhewing any ſigns of inſolence; this, however, did not hinder my ſervants from being terrified, as neither I nor any protector was near them. I reſolved to avoid the like inconvenience, by proceeding further, as I knew the next day the main body of theſe ſavages would be up with us at Dingleber; and I rather wiſhed to be at the point where our two roads ſeparated, than paſs a whole day in ſuch company. It is true, I was under no ſort of apprehenſion, for I perceived Faſil's horſe driven before us commanded all neceſſary reſpect, and Zor Woldo had no occaſion to exert himſelf at all.

At four o'clock in the afternoon we left Dingleber, and at ſeven paſſed a great river; at eight in the evening we croſſed two inconſiderable ſtreams, and came to a collection of ſmall villages, called Degwaſſa: here we entered into ſome narrow defiles between mountains, covered to the very top with herbage, and bruſhwood; it was a delightful night, and we were reſolved to make the moſt of it. On every ſide of us we heard Guinea fowls, of which the woods here are full. At half paſt nine we halted a little, juſt leaving the narrow paſſes, and entering upon the plain. The diſtrict is called Sankraber. I found myſelf exceedingly fatigued, and ſlept a good half hour upon the ground.

At half paſt ten we began our journey anew, paſſing immediately the ſmall village of Wainadega, famous for the deciſive battle fought between king Claudius and the Moor

Gragnè, where the latter was ſlain, and an end, for a time, put to the moſt diſaſtrous war that ever Abyſſinia was engaged in. At half after eleven we paſſed Guanguera on our left hand; it is a collection of many villages, at about ten miles diſtance; and at mid-night we had Degwaſſa on our right, and Guanguera on our left. At half paſt twelve we again reſted at the ſide of a ſmall river, of which I know not the name: we were now in the flat country of Maitſha, deſcending very gently ſouthward. At three quarters paſt one in the morning of the firſt of November I alighted at two ſmall villages, whoſe huts were but juſt finiſhed, about 500 yards from the two trees that were in the front of our army, when, after paſſing the Nile at that dangerous ford near the Jemma, we offered Faſil battle at Limjour, which was the place we were now again come to, but in better health and ſpirits than before.

Shalaka Woldo, upon my obſerving to him that I was happy to ſee the people again raiſing their houſes which Michael had deſtroyed, ſaid, with a barbarous kind of ſmile, "Aye, and ſo am I too; for if thoſe two villages had not been built, we ſhould have had no fire-wood at Kelti to-night;" by which he meant, that the Galla, who were behind him, and whoſe next ſtation was the banks of the river Kelti, would pull down all the new-built houſes, in order to carry fire-wood along with them; and indeed we ſaw traces of ſome houſes which had been newly built, and ſtill as newly deſtroyed, the wood of which, partly kindled, and partly lying on the ground, ſerved us for our fire that night at Kelti. I found myſelf exceedingly indiſpoſed, and could ſcarcely force on a couple of hours further, when we came to the banks of the river Kelti, at a quarter after ſix in the morning.

The Kelti here is a large river; at the ford it was four feet deep, though now the dry ſeaſon: it is here called the Kelti Branti, becauſe ſome miles higher up it is joined by a conſiderable river called the Branti, which riſes to the weſtward in the high lands of the Agow's Quaquera, and both theſe ſtreams, when united, fall into the Nile a little below. The banks of this river are exceedingly ſteep and dangerous, the earth looſe, falling in great lumps down into the ſtream; it is a red bole of a ſoapy quality; the bottom, too, and the aſcent on the other ſide are ſoft; the water, though troubled and muddy, is ſweet and well-taſted. We ſaw lights and fires on the oppoſite bank, and had begun to unlooſe the tent, when we received a meſſage by two Galla on foot, armed with lances and ſhields, that we ſhould not encamp there, as our horſes and mules would probably be ſtolen, but deſiring us to paſs the river forthwith, and pitch our tent among them.

I asked Shalaka Woldo who theſe were? He ſaid, they were an advanced poſt of Welleta Yaſous, who had taken up that ground for the head-quarters to-morrow; that they were all Galla, under a famous partiſan, a robber, called the *Jumper;* and, by the bye, he added, ſpeaking ſoftly in my ear, that there was not a greater thief or murderer in all the country of the Galla. I paid him my compliments upon the judicious choice he had made of a companion and a protector for us: to which he anſwered, laughing, The better, the better; you ſhall ſee how it is the better. As it was neceſſary to load the mules again, the tent and baggage having been taken off before we could paſs the river, we all ſet to work with very ill will, being exceſſively fatigued with a long journey and want of ſleep. No ſooner had Shalaka Woldo perceived this, than by two whiſtles upon his fingers, and a yell, he brought above fifty people to our aſſiſtance; the baggage was paſſed in one moment, and in another my two tents were pitched; which is a work theſe people are very dexterous at, and well acquainted with.

As ſoon as we had encamped, we found that the reaſon we were not left alone on the other ſide of the river was, that thoſe of the Galla who returned pulled down all the villages for fire-wood, and plundered the houſes, though they were Galla like themſelves, and of Faſil's party; and theſe again, driven from their houſes, robbed of all they had except their lance and ſhield, followed the ſtragglers, and wreaked their vengenance upon thoſe whom they could ſurpriſe, or were not too numerous for them.

I WAS ſcarcely laid down to ſleep, when a ſervant, and with him Zor Woldo, were ſent to me from the Jumper: they brought us a bull of an enormous ſize, but not very fat; though we were all pretty keen in point of appetite, the ſtock of proviſion ſent us ſeemed to defy our utmoſt endeavours, but we were ſure of aſſiſtants enough; ſo the bull was immediately killed and ſkinned. In the mean time, I took a ſhort, but very refreſhing ſleep, being reſolved to reſume my journey with the ſame diligence till we had got to the point where we might ſeparate from the army, which is at a place called Roo, where a large market is kept by the Agows, in whoſe country it is, and reſorted to by all the neighbouring inhabitants.

About ten o'clock I waited upon our commander in chief the Jumper; he ſeemed very much embarraſſed at the viſit, was quite naked, having only a towel about his loins, and had been waſhing himſelf in the Kelti, to very little purpoſe as I thought, for he was then rubbing his arms and body over with melted tallow; his hair had been abundantly anointed before, and a man was then finiſhing his head-dreſs by plaiting it with ſome of the long and ſmall guts of an ox, which I did not perceive had ever been cleaned; and he had already put about his neck two rounds of the ſame, in the manner of a necklace, or rather a ſolitaire, one end of them hanging down to the pit of his ſtomach. Our converſation was neither long nor intereſting; I was overcome with the diſagreeable ſmell of blood and carrion: he did not underſtand one word of Amharic, Geez, or any other language but Galla; he aſked no queſtions, and ſhewed no ſort of curioſity. Woldo, on the other hand, informed himſelf from him of every thing he wanted to know.

This Jumper was tall and lean, very ſharp faced, with a long noſe, ſmall eyes and prodigious large ears; he never looked you in the face, but was rolling his eyes conſtantly round and round, and never fixing them upon any thing: he reſembled very much a lean keen greyhound; there was no ſternneſs nor command in his countenance, but a certain look that ſeemed to expreſs a vacancy of mind, like that of an idiot. With this he was allowed on all hands to be the moſt cruel, mercileſs murderer and ſpoiler of all the Galla. He was very active on horſeback, and very indifferent about food or ſleep. I made him a ſmall preſent, which he took with great indifference; only told Woldo, that if I meant it to pay for the bull he had ſent me, it was needleſs, for it was given me by Faſil's order, and coſt him nothing.

There we learned, that on our way we ſhould meet a party of about 200 men, who had been ſent by Faſil to take poſſeſſion of a poſt before we came to Roo, leſt, having intelligence of us, ſome of the Maitſha people, whoſe houſes had been deſtroyed, might follow us when we were parted from the army. The jumper told us that his brother had the command of that party, that they were all Galla of Faſil's own nation, under his brother, who was called the Lamb, and who was juſt ſuch a murderer and robber as himſelf. I was juſt riſing to go out of his tent when Zor Woldo, who was ſitting behind me, informed me, there were news from Gondar. I aſked him how he knew that? He ſaid, he heard the people ſay ſo from without. A ſudden trepidation now ſeized me, as I was afraid of ſome new trick, or obſtacle, which might impede the journey, the accompliſhment of which I ſo much longed for.

Upon going towards my tent I was met by Strates, and another Greek, with a ſervant of Ozoro Eſther, with whom I was well acquainted: they had left Faſil at Bamba, whoſe wild Galla were not yet all diſmiſſed, and he himſelf ſeemed not determined whether he ſhould go to Gondar or not. They told me that all was in confuſion at Gondar; that Guſho of Amhara, and Powuſſen of Begemder, had been there, and brought ſome trifle of money, for a mere pretence, to that wretch Socinios, whom the Iteghé unadviſedly had conſented to make king; having called Faſil, Guſho, and Powuſſen together to reconcile them, that, united, they might attack Michael. The queen herſelf had been reconciled to Socinios, who led the life of a drunkard, a ruffian, and a profligate, but her chief fears were that Michael ſhould return, the probability of which increaſed daily.

As for Faſil, he had hitherto anſwered the queen's invitation to Gondar evaſively, ſometimes by complaining that Guſho and Powuſſen had come to Gondar before him, and that Guſho was made Ras; at other times ſending peremptorily to them to leave Gondar, and return to their provinces, or he would burn the town about their ears: and the laſt meſſage, the day before they left the capital was, that he was then on his march towards Gondar, and conſented to Guſho and Powuſſen's ſtaying; but as theſe two chiefs had great reaſon to ſuſpect that he was in correſpondence with the king and Ras Michael in Tigré, as it was known to them that he had fomented diſturbances both in Begemder and Amhara, they had gone with Socinios to Koſcam, without drums beating, or any ſort of parade whatever, and, after taking leave, had the next day ſet out to their reſpective provinces. Upon another meſſage from Faſil, they had agreed to return to Gondar, and leave their army at Emfras; but their troops, finding themſelves ſo near, had diſbanded, and returned to their homes, leaving Guſho and Powuſſen attended only by their houſehold ſervants, who, finding themſelves in danger, and that Faſil was actually advancing ſecretly, left Gondar and ſeparated.

Ozoro Esther's ſervant (Guebra Mariam) likewiſe told me, that Michael, as he believed, waited for nothing but ſome arrangement with Faſil, for that he had no enemy remaining on the eaſt of the Tacazzé; that his intention was to return by the way of Laſta, not willing to riſk the many difficult paſſages in Woggora, a country full of hardy troops, inveterate enemies to the Ras, and where Ayto Tesfos of Samen had occupied all the defiles, and was reſolved to diſpute every poſt with him; it was well known, however, that the paſſes through the mountain of Laſta, were more dangerous and difficult than thoſe of Woggora and Lamalmon; in a word, Guigarr, chief of the clan of Laſta (called Waag) poſſeſſed a ſtrong-hold in thoſe mountains, where many an Abyſſinian army had periſhed, and where it was abſolutely impoſſible to proceed but with the conſent and connivance of that clan, or tribe; and tho' this Guigarr had been Michael's enemy ever ſince the war of Mariam Barea, peace was now concluded between them, the Ras having ſet Guigarr's brother at liberty, who had been ſome time a priſoner, and was taken in an incurſion which the people of Waag had made into Tigré: excepting this paſs in the mountains of Laſta, all the ground was even from thence to Tigré; the territory of Gouliou, indeed, through which the army was to march for four days, was very ill-provided with water; it was inhabited by Galla, whom Michael had ſuffered to ſettle there, to be as a barrier between Tigré, Laſta, and Begemder; but this clan was perfectly at his command, ſo all was eaſy and ſecure if Guigarr only remained faithful.

After giving time to Guebra Mariam to refreſh himſelf, I took him alone into the tent to hear Ozoro Eſther's meſſage: ſhe had been ailing after my leaving Gondar, had had a ſlow fever, which very much affected her nerves, and was now alarmed at a ſymptom which was but the effect of weakneſs, ſtartling, or involuntary contraction of her legs and arms, or a kind of convulſion, which frequently awakened her out of her ſleep. This ſhe thought was a ſure forerunner of death; and adjured me, by every claim of friendſhip that ſhe had upon me, to return ere it would be too late, She, moreover, pledged herſelf that her nephew, Aylo of Gojam, ſhould immediately carry me to the head of the Nile the moment ſhe was recovered. Upon cloſer interrogation, I found that, being abandoned as it were entirely to Faſil's diſcretion, by the retreat of Guſho and Powuſſen her friends, and the abſence of her huſband Ras Michael, ſhe dreaded falling into the hands of Faſil, who, ſhe well knew, was acquainted how active ſhe had been in inſtigating Michael to avenge the blood of her late huſband Mariam Barea, by the effuſion of that of every Galla unfortunate enough to fall into his hands. Beſides, the part her mother the Iteghé had acted in ſettling that wretch Socinios upon the throne, gave her the very beſt-founded apprehenſions that Michael's reſentment would have no bounds; and he had declared ſo by frequent meſſages, (the laſt a very brutal one) that he would hang Socinios, and her mother the Iteghé, with their heads downmoſt, upon the ſame tree, before the king's houſe, the very day that he entered Gondar. It was well known, beſides, to his wife Ozoro Eſther, and to the whole kingdom, that his performance upon theſe occaſions never fell ſhort of his threatnings. From all this, and a great ſenſibility of mind, Ozoro Eſther, worn out by her late ſickneſs, and by want of ſleep, exerciſe, and nouriſhment, had fallen into a very dangerous ſituation, and of a very difficult cure, even though the cauſe was perfectly known.

I SHALL not trouble the reader with what paſſed in my mind at this juncture. I do believe the purſuit I was then engaged in was the only one which I would not have inſtantly abandoned upon ſuch a ſummons. Beſides the ſincere

cere attachment I had myſelf to her, as one of the moſt lovely and amiable women in the world; ſhe was the mother of my moſt intimate friend Ayto Confu, and the wife of Ras Michael, over whom ſhe had every day more and more influence, and I had long ſuſpected that the young king, my conſtant benefactor, had contracted a decided tenderneſs for her. To have returned, would have been nothing had the danger or trouble been much greater; but it was obviouſly impoſſible another opportunity ſhould offer: the country was now on the point of being plunged into a degree of diſorder greater than that which had occaſioned the retreat of the king to Tigré. I therefore reſolved to run the riſk of continuing for a time under the imputation of the fouleſt and baſeſt of all ſins, that of ingratitude to my benefactors; and I am confident, had it been the will of heaven that I had died in that journey, the conſideration of my lying with apparent reaſon under that imputation would have been one of the moſt bitter reflections of my laſt moments. Having, therefore, taken my reſolution, I acquainted Guebra Mariam that an immediate return was abſolutely impoſſible; but that I ſhould endeavour, with the utmoſt of my power, to make a ſpeedy one; in the mean time, I ſent word to the Greek prieſt (who was a ſort of phyſician) how he was to proceed in the interim during my abſence.

We had now left Maitſha by croſſing the river Kelti. I ſhall only add, to what I have already ſaid, that it is a very fruitful country, but ſo flat that the water with difficulty runs off after the tropical rains, and this occaſions its being for ſeveral months unhealthy. Several tribes of Galla, from the ſouth of the Nile, were ſettled here by Yaſous the Great,

and

and his ſon David, as a defence for the rich countries of the Agows, Damot, Gojam, and Dembea, againſt the deſolations and inroads of the wild Galla their countrymen, from whom they had revolted; they conſiſt of ninety-nine families; and it is a common ſaying among them, that the devil holds the hundreth part for his own family, as there is nowhere elſe to be found a family of men equal to any of the ninety-nine. It has been ſometimes connected with Gojam, oftener with Damot and the Agows, who were at this time under the government of Faſil.

The houſes in Maitſha are of a very ſingular conſtruction: the firſt proprietor has a field, which he divides into three or four, as he pleaſes, (ſuppoſe four) by two hedges made of the thorny branches of the acacia-tree. In the corner, or interſection of the two hedges, he begins his low hut, and occupies as much of the angle as he pleaſes. Three other brothers, perhaps, occupy each of the three other angles; behind theſe their children place their houſe, and incloſe the end of their father's by another, which they make generally ſhorter than the firſt, becauſe broader. After they have raiſed as many houſes as they pleaſe, they ſurround the whole with a thick and almoſt impenetrable abbatis, or thorny hedge, and all the family are under one roof, ready to aſſiſt each other on the firſt alarm; for they have nothing to do but every man to look out at his own door, and they are cloſe in a body together, facing every point that danger can poſſibly come from. They are, however, ſpeedily deſtroyed by a ſtronger enemy, as we eaſily found, for we had only to ſet the dry hedge, and the canes that grew round it, on fire, which communicated at once to the houſes, chiefly conſiſting of dry ſtraw. Such is their terror of the ſmall-pox, which comes here ſeldom more frequently than once in fifteen or twenty years; that when one of theſe houſes is tainted with the diſeaſe, their neighbours, who know it will infect the whole colony, ſurround it in the night, and ſet fire to it, which is conſumed in a minute, whilſt the unfortunate people belonging to it (who would endeavour to eſcape) are unmercifully thruſt back with lances and forks into the flames by the hands of their own neighbours and relations, without an inſtance of one ever being ſuffered to ſurvive. This to us will appear a barbarity ſcarcely credible: it would be quite otherwiſe if we ſaw the ſituation of the country under that dreadful viſitation of the ſmall-pox; the plague has nothing in it ſo terrible.

THE river Kelti has excellent fiſh, though the Abyſſinians care not for food of this kind; the better people eat ſome ſpecies in the time of Lent, but the generality of the common ſort are deterred by paſſages of ſcripture, and diſtinctions in the Moſaic law, concerning ſuch animals as are clean and unclean, ill underſtood; they are, beſides, exceedingly lazy, and know nothing of nets; neither have they the ingenuity we ſee in other ſavages of making hooks or lines: in all the time I ſtaid, I never ſaw one Abyſſinian fiſher engaged in the employment in any river or lake.

AT Kelti begins the territory of Arooſſi: it is in fact the ſouthmoſt diviſion of Maitſha, on the weſt-ſide of the Nile: it is not inhabited, however, by Galla, but by Abyſſinians, a kindred of the Agow. When therefore we paſſed the river Kelti, we entered into the territory of Arooſſi, bounded on the north by that river, as it is on the ſouth

by

by the Aſſar, the Arooſſi running through the midſt of that diſtrict.

My anxiety to loſe no time in this journey had determined me to ſet out this afternoon. I had for this purpoſe diſpatched Ozoro Eſther's ſervant, but when we began to ſtrike our tents, we were told neither beaſt nor man was capable of going farther that day; in a word, the forced march that we had made of 29 miles without reſt, and with but little food, had quite jaded our mules; our men, too, who carried the quadrant, declared, that, without a night's reſt, they could proceed no farther; we were then obliged to make a virtue of neceſſity, and to confeſs, that, ſince we could go no farther, we were in the moſt convenient halting place poſſible, having plenty of both food and water, and as to protection, we had every reaſon to be ſatisfied that we were maſters of the country in which we were encamped. It was generally agreed therefore to relax that day. I ſet aſide an hour to put theſe memoirs in order, and then joined our ſervants, who, on ſuch occaſions, are always our companions, and who had provided a ſmall horn full of ſpirits, and a jar full of beer, or bouza, by offering ſome trifling preſent to our commandant *the Jumper*, who was much more tenacious of his drink than his meat: we ſwam and dabbled with great delight in the Kelti, where are neither crocodiles nor gomari; ſlept a little afterwards, and retired into the tent to a ſupper, which would have been a chearful one could I have forgot that Ozoro Eſther was ſuffering.

We now began to diſcuſs the motive that had induced our friend Strates again to tempt the danger of the ways. This ſingular fellow, as we learned from Guebra Mariam, as well as from his own confeſſion, repented of his reſolution as ſoon as we were gone, and had determined on foot to follow us, when he heard of this opportunity of Ozoro Eſther's ſervant being ſent on a meſſage, and that princeſs was ſo well pleaſed with his anxiety that ſhe gave him a mule that he might not retard her ſervant.

This Greek had known Faſil intimately, both when he was a private man in Kaſmati Eſhté's time, and afterwards, when he was governor of Damot, for he was a ſervant in the palace when Joas was king, as all the Greeks were; had a company of fuſileers, and one or two other ſmall appointments, all of which were taken from him, and from moſt of the other Greeks, upon the death of the dwarf, who, I before mentioned, was ſhot on the ſide of Ras Michael by an unknown hand upon his firſt arrival at Gondar. He now lived upon the charity of the queen-mother, and what he picked up by his buffoonery among the great men at court. We found that in Shalaka Woldo we had got a man of more underſtanding than our friend Strates, but much about his equal in mimicry and buffoonery.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Continue our Journey—Fall in with a Party of Galla—Prove our Friends—Paſs the Nile—Arrive at Goutto, and viſit the firſt Cataract.

ON the ſecond of November, at ſeven in the morning we purſued our journey in a direction ſouthward, and paſſed the church of Boſkon Abbo; ever memorable to us as being the ſtation of Faſil in May, when he intended to cut us off after our paſſage of the Nile. This brought on a converſation with our guide Woldo, who had been preſent with Faſil at his camp behind this church, and afterwards when Michael offered him battle at Limjour, he was there attending his maſter. He ſaid, that the army of Welleta Yaſous was above 12,000 ſtrong; that they were intending to attack the king at the ford, and had no doubt of doing it ſucceſsfully, as they imagined the King and Ras Michael, with part of both horſe and foot, would paſs early, but the reſt with difficulty and danger; it was at that inſtant Welleta Yaſous was to fall upon thoſe that remained with Keſla Yaſous, on the other ſide of the Nile, in that confuſion in which they neceſſarily muſt be. Faſil then, with above 3000 horſe, and a large body of foot, was ready to incloſe both Ras Michael and the King, and to have taken them priſoners; nothing could fall out more exactly, as it was planned, than this did; the king's black horſe, and the other horſe of his houſehold, had taken poſſeſſion of the ford, till the King, the Ras, and the greateſt part of the Tigré muſqueteers, under Guebra Maſcal, had paſſed.

On the other hand, Keſla Yaſous, who had the charge of the rear, and the paſſing the mules, tents, and baggage, finding ſo many ſtragglers conſtantly coming in, had determined to wait on that ſide till day-light: this was the moment that would have decided the fate of our army; all was fatigue and deſpondency; but Welleta Yaſous having lingered with the army of execution, and in the mean time the prieſts having been examined, and the ſpies detected, the moment Keſla Yaſous began his march to Delakus, the favourable inſtant was loſt to Faſil, and all that followed was extremely dangerous to him; for, before Welleta Yaſous arrived, Keſla Yaſous had paſſed the Nile, and was ſtrongly poſted with his muſquetry, ſo that Welleta Yaſous durſt not approach him, and this gave Keſla Yaſous an opportunity of detaching the beſt or freſheſt of his troops to reinforce Michael, whom Faſil found already an overmatch for him at Limjour, when he was forced to retreat before the king, who very willingly offered him battle: add to this, that Welleta Yaſous was not acquainted how near this junction of Keſla Yaſous with Ras Michael might be, nor where Faſil was, or whether or not he had been beaten. Woldo pretended to know nothing of the ſpy whom we had left hanging on the tree at the ford when Keſla Yaſous marched; but he laid all the blame upon the prieſts, of whoſe information he was perfectly inſtructed.

At three quarters after ten in the morning we paſſed the ſmall river Arooſſi, which either gives its name to, or receives it from the diſtrict through which it paſſes: it falls into the Nile about four miles below; is a clear, ſmall, briſk ſtream; its banks covered with verdure not to be deſcribed. At half an hour before noon we came to Roo; it is a level ſpace, ſhaded round with trees in a ſmall plain, where the neighbouring people of Goutto, Agow, and Maitſha hold a market for hides, honey, butter, and all kinds of cattle. Gold too is brought by the Agows from the neighbouring Shangalla; all the markets in Abyſſinia are held in ſuch places as this in the open fields, and under the ſhade of trees: every body, while he is there, is ſafe under the protection of the government where that market is kept, and no feuds or private animoſities muſt be reſented there; but they that have enemies muſt take care of themſelves in coming and going, for then they are at their own riſk.

In the dry bed of a river, at the foot of a ſmall wood before you aſcend the market-place at Roo, we found the *Lamb*, our friend the *Jumper's* brother, concealed very much like a thief in a hole, where we might eaſily have paſſed him unnoticed; we gave him ſome tobacco, of which he was very fond, and a few trifles. We aſked him what queſtions we pleaſed about the roads, which he anſwered plainly, ſhortly, and diſcreetly; he aſſured us no Maitſha people had paſſed, not even to the market, and this we found afterwards was ſtrictly true; for ſuch as had intelligence that he and his party were on that road, did not venture from home with their goods, ſo that the day before, which had been that of the market, no one choſe to run the riſk of attending it.

Woldo was very eloquent in praiſe of this officer the *Lamb;* he ſaid he had a great deal more humanity than his brother, and when he made an inroad into Gojam, or any part of Abyſſinia, he never murdered any women, not even thoſe that were with child; a contrary cuſtom it ſeems prevailing among all the Galla. I congratulated him upon this great inſtance of his humanity, which he took very gravely, as if really intended; he told me that it was he that attacked Michael's horſe at Limjour; and added, that, had it been any other, Ayto Welleta Michael's life would not have been ſpared when he was taken priſoner. That want of curioſity, inattention, and abſolute indifference for new objects, which was remarkable in the Jumper, was very plainly diſcernible in this chieftain likewiſe, and ſeems to be a characteriſtic of the nation.

I asked Woldo what became of thoſe 44 Galla who had their eyes pulled out, after the battle of Fagitta, by Michael, on his return to Gondar. Not one of them, ſaid he, ever came into his own country. It was reported the hyæna ate them upon the Angrab, where they were turned out to ſtarve. I ſaved three of them, ſaid I. Yes, anſwered he, and others might have been ſaved too: and then added, in a low voice, the hyænas eating them at the Angrab was a ſtory contrived for the Galla; but we that are Faſil's ſervants know they were made away with by his order in Maitſha and the Agow country, that none of them might be ſeen in their own provinces to terrify the reſt of their clans by the mangled appearance they then bore; for this was Ras Michael's intention in disfiguring them, and yet leaving them alive; to prevent therefore the ſucceſs of this ſcheme, Faſil put them to death in their way before they reached their own country. I confeſs I was ſtruck at the fineſſe which completed Waragna Faſil's character in my mind. What, ſaid I, kill his own people taken priſoners whilſt fighting for him, merely becauſe their enemies had cruelly deprived them of their ſight! indeed, Woldo, that is not credible. O ho, ſays he, but it is true; your Galla are not like other men, they do not talk about what is cruel and what is not; they do juſt what is for their own good, what is reaſonable, and think no more of the matter. Ras Michael, ſays he, would make an excellent Galla; and do not you believe that he would do any cruel action which my maſter Faſil would not perpetrate on the ſame provocation, and to anſwer the ſame purpoſe?

It now occurred to me why the three Galla, whom I had maintained at Gondar, had conſtantly refuſed to return into their own country with the many ſafe opportunities which at times had preſented to them, eſpecially ſince the king's retreat to Tigré; neither had I obſerved any deſire in Faſil's ſervants, who occaſionally came to Gondar, of helping to reſtore theſe unfortunate men to their country, becauſe they knew the fate that awaited them.

Although the *Lamb*, and the other Galla his ſoldiers, paid very little attention, as I have ſaid, to us, it was remarkable to ſee the reſpect they ſhewed Faſil's horſe; the greateſt part of them, one by one, gave him handfuls of barley, and the *Lamb* himſelf had a long and ſerious converſation with him; Woldo told me it was all ſpent in regretting the horſe's ill-fortune, and Faſil's cruelty, in having beſtowed him upon a white man, who would not feed him, or ever let him return to Bizamo. Bizamo is a country of Galla ſouth of the Nile, after it makes its ſouthmoſt turn, and has ſurrounded the kingdom of Gojam. I was better pleaſed with this genuine mark of kindneſs to the horſe, than all the proofs of humanity Woldo had attributed to his chieftain for not frequently putting to death pregnant women. When I remarked this, Bad men! bad men! all of them, ſays Woldo; but your Ras Michael will be among them one of theſe days, and pull all their eyes out again; and ſo much the better.

At Roo we left the direct road which leads to Buré, the reſidence of the governor of Damot, towards which place the route of the army was directed; ſo I took leave, as I hoped, for ever of my brethren the Galla, but ſtill continued to drive the horſe before me. We turned our face now directly upon the fountains of the Nile, which lay S. E. by S. according to the compaſs. At a quarter before noon we ſaw the high ſharp-pointed mountain of Temhua, ſtanding ſingle in the form of a cone, at about 18 miles diſtance, and behind this the mountain of Banja, the place where Faſil almoſt exterminated the Agows in a battle ſoon after his return to Buré, and to revenge which the king's laſt fatal campaign was undertaken in Maitſha, terminated by his retreat to Tigrè.

Here Strates, whilſt amuſing himſelf in the wood in ſearch of new birds and beaſts for our collection of natural hiſtory, fired his gun at one of the former, diſtinguiſhed by the beauty and variety of its plumage. I ſtopt to make a rough ſketch of it, which might be finiſhed at more leiſure: this was ſcarcely done, and we again moving forwards on our journey, when we heard a confuſion of ſhrill, barbarous cries, and preſently ſaw a number of horſemen pouring down upon us, with their lances lifted up in a poſture ready to attack us immediately. The ground was woody and uneven, ſo they could not make the ſpeed they ſeemed to deſire, and we had juſt time to put ourſelves upon our defence with our firelocks, muſquets, and blunderbuſſes in our hands, behind our baggage. Woldo ran ſeveral paces towards them, knowing them by the cry to be friends, even before he had ſeen them, which was, Faſil ali, Faſil ali—*there is none but Faſil that commands here.* Upon ſeeing us without any marks of diſcompoſure, they all ſtopt with Woldo, and by him we learned that this was the party we had paſſed commanded by the *Lamb*, who, after we had left him, had heard that five Agow horſemen had paſſed between the army and his party, and from the ſhot he had feared they might have attempted ſomething againſt us, and he had thereupon come to our aſſiſtance with all the ſpeed poſſible.

Thus did we ſee that this man, who, according to our ideas, ſeemed in underſtanding inferior to moſt of the brute creation, had yet, in executing his orders, a diſcernment, punctuality, activity, and ſenſe of duty, equal to any Chriſtian officer who ſhould have had a like commiſſion; he now appeared to us in a quite different light than when we firſt had met him; and his inattention, when we were with him, was the more agreeable, as it left us at our entire liberty, without teazing or moleſting us, when he could be of no real ſervice, as every Amharic ſoldier would have done. On the other hand, his alacrity and reſolution, in the moment he thought us in danger, exhibited him to our view as having on both occaſions juſt the qualities we could have deſired. We now, therefore, ſhewed him the utmoſt civility, ſpread a table-cloth on the ground by the brook, mixed our honey and liquid butter together in a plate, and laid plenty of teff bread beſide it. We invited the Lamb to ſit down and breakfaſt with us, which he did, each of us dipping our hand with pieces of bread alternately into the diſh which contained the honey; but Strates, whoſe heart was open, for he felt very gratefully the Lamb's attention to ſave him from being murdered by the Agows, pulled out a large piece of raw beef, part of the bullock we killed at Kelti, which he had perfectly cleared from all incumbrance of bones, this he gave to the Lamb, deſiring him to divide it among his men, which he did, keeping a very ſmall proportion to himſelf, and which he ate before us. Drink we had none, but the water of the brook that ran by, for my people had finiſhed all our other liquors at Kelti after I was in bed, when they were taking their leave of Guebra Mariam, Ozoro Eſther's ſervant.

It was now time to purſue our journey; and, to ſhew our gratitude for the real ſervice this Lamb intended to have rendered us, I gave him four times the quantity of tobacco he had got before, and ſo in proportion of every other trifle; all theſe he took with abſolute indifference as formerly, much as if it had been all his own; he expreſſed no ſort of thanks either in his words or in his countenance; only while at breakfaſt ſaid, that he was very much grieved that it had been but a falſe alarm, for he heartily deſired that ſome robbers really had attacked us, that he might have ſhewn us how quickly and dexterouſly he would have cut them to pieces though there had been a hundred of them. I mentioned to Woldo my obligations to the Lamb for his good wiſhes, but that things were quite as well as they were; that I had no ſort of curioſity for ſuch exhibitions, which I did not however doubt he would have performed moſt dexterouſly.

We were now taking leave to proceed on our journey, and my ſervant folding up the table-cloth, when the Lamb deſired to ſpeak to Woldo, and for the firſt time ventured to make a requeſt, which was a very extraordinary one; he begged that I would give him the table-cloth to cover his head, and keep his face from the ſun. I could not help laughing within myſelf at the idea of preſerving that beautiful complexion from ſun-burning; but I gave him the cloth very readily, which he accordingly ſpread upon his head, till it covered half his face; he then got upon his horſe and rode quietly away. Before he went, he detached fifteen men, Woldo ſaid he did not know where, but by what he had gathered, and the route they had taken, he was ſure that detachment was meant for our ſervice, and to protect us on the right of our route, not having yet ſufficiently quieted his own mind about the five Agows that paſſed between the army and his poſt the night we were at Kelti; theſe, however, being poorly mounted and armed, would not have found their account in meddling with us, though we had no wiſhes to ſhew our dexterity in deſtroying them, as our friend the Lamb was ſo deſirous of doing, and we after diſcovered they were not quite ſo deſpicable as they were repreſented, nor were they Agows. All this paſſed in much leſs time than it is told. We were on horſeback again in little more than half an hour; our friends were, like us, willing to meet and willing to part, only I ordered Strates to ſuſpend his firing for that day, leſt it ſhould procure us another interview, which we by no means courted.

We had halted by the ſide of a ſmall river which falls into the Aſſar; and a little before one o'clock we came to the Aſſar itſelf. The Aſſar, as I have already ſaid, is the ſouthern boundary of Arooſſi, as Kelti is the northern; and as Arooſſi is the ſouthern diſtrict of Maitſha on the weſt ſide of the Nile, it follows that the Aſſar is the ſouthern boundary of Maitſha.

On the other ſide of this river begins the province of Goutto, which, according to the ancient rules of government before Ras Michael deſtroyed all diſtinctions, depended on the province of Damot; whereas Maitſha belonged to the office of Betwudet ſince Faſil had appropriated both to himſelf by force, as well as the whole country of the Agows, which he had poſſeſſed by the ſame title ever ſince the battle of Banja: the inhabitants of Goutto are the ancient natives of that country; they are not Galla as thoſe of Maitſha, but much more civilized and better governed. The language of the Agow and the Amharic are the two chiefly ſpoken in Goutto, though there are diſtant places towards the Jemma on the ſide of the Nile, where they ſpeak that of the Falaſha likewiſe. The people in Goutto are richer and better lodged than thoſe of the neighbouring Maitſha; their whole country is full of cattle of the largeſt ſize, exceedingly beautiful, and of all the different colours; there are ſome places likewiſe where their honey is excellent, equal to any in the country of the Agows, but the greateſt quantity of it is of low price and of little eſteem, owing to the lupine flowers on which the bees feed, and of which a great quantity covers the whole face of the country; this gives a bitterneſs to the greateſt part of the honey, and occaſions, as they believe, vertigo's, or dizzineſſes, to thoſe that eat it: the ſame would happen with the Agows, did they not take care to eradicate the lupines throughout their whole country.

All this little territory of Arooſſi is by much the moſt pleaſant that we had ſeen in Abyſſinia, perhaps it is equal to any thing the eaſt can produce; the whole is finely ſhaded with acacia-trees, I mean the acacia vera, or the Egyptian thorn, the tree which, in the ſultry parts of Africa, produces the gum-arabic. Theſe trees grow ſeldom above fifteen or ſixteen feet high, then flatten and ſpread wide at the top, and touch each other, while the trunks are far aſunder, and under a vertical ſun, leave you, many miles together, a free ſpace to walk in a cool, delicious ſhade. There is ſcarce any tree but this in Maitſha; all Guanguera and Wainadega are full of them; but in theſe laſt-mentioned places, near the capital, where the country grows narrower, being confined between the lake and the mountains, theſe trees are more in the way of the march of armies, and are thinner, as being conſtantly cut down for fuel, and never replanted, or ſuffered to replace themſelves, which they otherwiſe would do, and cover the whole face of the country, as once apparently they did. The ground below thoſe trees, all throughout Arooſſi, is thick covered with lupines, almoſt to the excluſion of every other flower; wild oats alſo grow up here ſpontaneouſly to a prodigious height and ſize, capable often of concealing both the horſe and his rider, and ſome of the ſtalks being little leſs than an inch in circumference. They have, when ripe, the appearance of ſmall canes. The inhabitants make no ſort of uſe of this grain in any period of its growth: the uppermoſt thin huſk of it is beautifully variegated with a changeable purple colour; the taſte is perfectly good. I often made the meal into cakes in remembrance of Scotland.

The Abyſſinians never could reliſh theſe cakes, which they ſaid were bitter, and burnt their ſtomachs, as alſo made them thirſty. I do, however, believe this is the oat in its original ſtate, and that it is degenerated everywhere with us. The ſoil of this country is a fine black mould, in appearance like to that which compoſes our gardens. The oat ſeems to delight in a moiſt, watery ſoil; and, as no underwood grows under the ſhadow of the trees, the plough paſſes without interruption. As there is likewiſe no iron in their plough, (for is it all compoſed of wood) the furrow is a very ſlight one, nor does the plough reach deep enough to be entangled with the roots of trees; but it is the north part of Maitſha, however, that is chiefly in culture; ſouth of the Kelti all is paſture; a large number of horſes is bred here yearly, for it is the cuſtom among the Galla to be all horſemen or graziers.

All Arooſſi is finely watered with ſmall ſtreams, though the Aſſar is the largeſt river we had ſeen except the Nile; it was about 170 yards broad and two feet deep, running over a bed of large ſtones; though generally through a flat and level country, it is very rapid, and after much rain ſcarcely paſſable, owing to the height of its ſource in the mountains of the Agows; its courſe, where we forded it, is from ſouth to north, but it ſoon turns to the north-eaſt, and, after flowing five or ſix miles, joins the Nile and loſes itſelf in that river.

Immediately below this ford of the Aſſar is a magnificent caſcade, or cataract. I computed the perpendicular height of the fall to be above 20 feet, and the breadth of the ſtream to be ſomething more than 80; but it is ſo cloſely covered with trees or buſhes, and the ground ſo uneven, that it needs great perſeverance and attention to approach it nearly with ſafety; the ſtream covers the rock without leaving any part of it viſible, and the whole river falls uninterrupted down with an incredible violence and noiſe, without being anyway broken or divided; below this cataract it becomes conſiderably narrower, and, as we have ſaid, in this ſtate runs on to join the Nile.

The ſtrength of vegetation which the moiſture of this river produces, ſupported by the action of a very warm ſun, is ſuch as one might naturally expect from theory, though we cannot help being ſurpriſed at the effects when we ſee them before us, trees and ſhrubs covered with flowers of every colour, all new and extraordinary in their ſhapes, crowded with birds of many uncouth forms, all of them richly adorned with variety of plumage, and ſeeming to fix their reſidence upon the banks of this river, without a deſire of wandering to any diſtance in the neighbouring fields: But as there is nothing, though ever ſo beautiful, that has not ſome defect or imperfection, among all theſe feathered beauties there is not one ſongſter; and, unleſs of the roſe, or jeſſamin kind, none of their flowers have any ſmell; we hear indeed many ſqualling noiſy birds of the jay kind, and we find two varieties of wild roſes, white and yellow, to which

I may add jeſſamin (called Leham) which becomes a large tree; but all the reſt of the birds or flowers may be conſidered as liable to the general obſervation, that the flowers are deſtitute of odour, and the birds of ſong.

After paſſing the Aſſar, and ſeveral villages belonging to Goutto, our courſe being S. E. we had, for the firſt time, a diſtinct view of the high mountain of Geeſh, the long-wiſhed-for end of our dangerous and troubleſome journey. Under this mountain are the fountains of the Nile; it bore from us S. E. by S. about thirty miles, as near as we could conjecture, in a ſtraight line, without counting the deviations or crookedneſs of the road.

Ever ſince we had paſſed the Aſſar we had been deſcending gently through very uneven ground, covered thick with trees, and torn up by the gullies and courſes of torrents. At two o'clock in the afternoon of the ſecond of November we came to the banks of the Nile; the paſſage is very difficult and dangerous, the bottom being full of holes made by conſiderable ſprings, light ſinking ſand, and, at every little diſtance, large rocky ſtones; the eaſtern ſide was muddy and full of pits, the ground of clay: the Nile here is about 260 feet broad, and very rapid; its depth about four feet in the middle of the river, and the ſides not above two. Its banks are of a very gentle, eaſy deſcent; the weſtern ſide is chiefly ornamented with high trees of the ſalix, or willow tribe, growing ſtraight, without joints or knots, and bearing long pointed pods full of a kind of cotton. This tree is called, in their language, Ha; the uſe they have for it is to make charcoal for the compoſition of gunpowder; but on the eaſtern ſide, the banks, to a conſiderable diſtance from the river, are covered with black, dark, and thick groves, with craggy-pointed rocks, and overſhaded with ſome old, tall, timber trees going to decay with age; a very rude and awful face of nature, a cover from which our fancy ſuggeſted a lion ſhould iſſue, or ſome animal or monſter yet more ſavage and ferocious.

The veneration ſtill paid in this country for the Nile, ſuch as obtained in antiquity, extends to the territory of Goutto, and I believe very little farther; the reaſon is, I apprehend, that to this, and no lower, the country has remained under its ancient inhabitants. Below, we know Maitſha has been occupied within theſe few ages by Pagan Galla, tranſplanted here for political purpoſes; at Goutto, however, and in the provinces of the Agows, the genuine indigenæ have not emigrated, and with theſe the old ſuperſtition is more firmly rooted in their hearts than is the more recent doctrine of Chriſtianity; they crowded to us at the ford, and they were, after ſome ſtruggle, of great uſe in paſſing us, but they proteſted immediately with great vehemence againſt any man's riding acroſs the ſtream, mounted either upon horſe or mule: they, without any ſort of ceremony, unloaded our mules, and laid our baggage upon the graſs, inſiſting that we ſhould take off our ſhoes, and making an appearance of ſtoning thoſe who attempted to waſh the dirt off their cloaks and trowſers in the ſtream. My ſervants were by this provoked to return rudeneſs for rudeneſs, and Woldo gave them two or three ſignificant threats, while I ſat by exceedingly happy at having ſo unexpectedly found the remnants of veneration for that ancient deity ſtill ſubſiſting in ſuch full vigour. They after this allowed us, as well as our horſes and mules, to drink, and conducted me acroſs the river, holding me on each ſide very attentively for fear of the holes; but the want of ſhoes was very inconvenient, the pointed rocks and ſtones at the bottom giving me ſeveral deep cuts on the ſoles of my feet; after this the beaſts were led all to the ſame ſide with myſelf, alſo one ſervant was paſſed with the greateſt care by theſe poor people. Woldo had tipt me the wink to croſs as they deſired me: except my ſingle gun, all the fire-arms and ſervants remained with the baggage and Woldo; and now we ſoon ſaw what was his intention, and how well he underſtood that the country he was in belonged to Faſil his maſter.

THERE were between twenty and thirty of the Agows, old and young, ſome of them armed with lances and ſhields, and all of them with knives. Woldo took his ſmall ſtick in one hand, ſat down upon a green hillock by the ford with his lighted pipe in the other; he ranged my people behind him, leaving the baggage by itſelf, and began gravely to exhort the Agows to loſe no time in carrying over our baggage upon their ſhoulders. This propoſal was treated with a kind of ridicule by the foremoſt of the Agows, and they began plainly to inſinuate that he ſhould firſt ſettle with them a price for their trouble. He continued, however, ſmoaking his pipe in ſeeming leiſure, and much at his eaſe, and, putting on an air of great wiſdom, in a tone of moderation he appealed to them whether they had not of their own accord inſiſted on our croſſing the river on foot, had unloaded our baggage, and ſent the mules to the other ſide without our conſent. The poor people candidly declared that they had done ſo, becauſe none are permitted in any other manner to croſs the Nile, but that they would likewiſe carry our baggage ſafely and willingly over for pay; this word was no ſooner uttered, when, apparently in a moſt violent paſſion, he leapt up, laid by his pipe, took his ſtick, and ran into the midſt of them, crying out with violent execrations, And who am I? and who am I then? a girl, a woman, or a Pagan dog like yourſelves? and who is Waragna Faſil; are you not his ſlaves? or to whom elſe do you belong, that you are to make me pay for the conſequences of your deviliſh idolatries and ſuperſtitions? but you want payment, do ye? here is your payment: he then tuckt his clothes tight about his girdle, began leaping two or three feet high, and laying about him with his ſtick over their heads and faces, or wherever he could ſtrike them.

After this Woldo wreſted a lance from a long, aukward fellow that was next him, ſtanding amazed, and levelled the point at him in a manner that I thought to ſee the poor peaſant fall dead in an inſtant: the fellow fled in a trice, ſo did they all to a man; and no wonder, for in my life I never ſaw any one play the furious devil ſo naturally. Upon the man's running off, he cried out to my people to give him a gun, which made theſe poor wretches run faſter and hide themſelves among the buſhes: lucky, indeed, was it for Woldo that my ſervants did not put him to the trial, by giving him the gun as he demanded, for he would not have ventured to fire it, perhaps to have touched it, if it had been to have made him maſter of the province.

I, who ſat a ſpectator on the other ſide, thought we were now in a fine ſcrape, the evening coming on at a time of the year when it is not light at ſix, my baggage and ſervants on one ſide of the river, myſelf and beaſts on the other, crippled abſolutely in the feet by the ſtones, and the river ſo full of pits and holes, that, had they been all laden on the other ſide and ready, no one could have been bold enough to lead a beaſt through without a guide: the difficulty was not imaginary, I had myſelf an inſtant before made proof of it, and all difficulties are relative, greater or leſs, as you have means in your hands to overcome them. I was clearly ſatisfied that Woldo knew the country, and was provided with a remedy for all this; I conceived that this pacific behaviour, while they were unloading the mules, and driving them acroſs the river, as well as his fury afterwards, was part of ſome ſcheme, with which I was reſolved in no ſhape to interfere; and nothing convinced me more of this than his reſolute demand of a gun, when no perſuaſion could make him ſtay within ten yards of one if it was diſcharged, even though the muzzle was pointed a contrary direction. I ſat ſtill, therefore, to ſee the end, and it was with ſome ſurpriſe that I obſerved him to take his pipe, ſtick, and my ſervants along with him, and croſs the river to me as if nothing had happened, leaving the baggage on the other ſide, without any guard whatſoever; he then deſired us all to get on horſeback, and drive the mules before us, which we did accordingly; and I ſuppoſe we had not advanced about a hundred yards before we ſaw a greater number of people than formerly run down to where our baggage was lying, and, while one croſſed the river to deſire us to ſtay where we were, the reſt brought the whole over in an inſtant.

THIS, however, did not ſatisfy our guide; he put on a ſulky air, as if he had been grievouſly injured; he kept the mules where they were, and would not ſend one back to be loaded at the river-ſide, alledging it was unlucky to turn back upon a journey; he made them again take the baggage on their ſhoulders, and carry it to the very place where our mules had halted, and there lay it down. On this they all flocked about him, begging that he would not report them to his maſter, as fearing ſome fine, or heavy chaſtiſement, would fall upon their villages. The guide looked very ſulky, ſaid but very little, and that all in praiſe of himſelf, of his known mildneſs and moderation; as an inſtance of which he appealed (impudently enough) to his late behaviour towards them. If ſuch a one, ſays he, naming a man that they knew, had been in my place, what a fine reckoning he would have made with you; why, your puniſhment would not have ended in ſeven years. They all acknowledged the truth of his obſervation, as well as his moderation, gave him great commendations, and, I believe, ſome promiſes when he paſſed there on his return.

Here I thought our affair happily ended to the ſatisfaction of all parties. I mounted my horſe, and Woldo went to a large ſilk bag, or purſe, which I had given him full of tobacco, and he had his match and pipe in his hand, juſt as if he was going to fill it before he ſet out; he then unlooſed the bag, felt it on the outſide, putting firſt his three fingers, then his whole hand, pinching and ſqueezing it both withinſide and without; at laſt he broke out in a violent tranſport of rage, crying that *his gold* was gone, and that they had robbed him of it. I had not till this ſpoke one word: I aſked him what he meant by his gold. He ſaid he had two ounces (value about 5l.) in his tobacco purſe, and that ſome perſon had laid hold of them when the baggage lay on the other ſide of the water; that the Agows had done it, and that they muſt pay him for it. The deſpair and anguiſh that he had counterfeited quickly appeared in true and genuine colours in the faces of all the poor Agows; for his part, he diſdained to ſpeak but in monoſyllables—So, ſo, and very well, and no matter, you ſhall ſee—and ſhook his head. We now proceeded on our journey; but two of the eldeſt among the Agows followed him to our quarters at night, where they made their peace with Woldo, who, I doubt not, dealt with them according to his uſual mildneſs, juſtice, and moderation; a ſpecimen of which we have already ſeen.

I CONFESS this complicated piece of roguery, ſo ſuddenly invented, and ſo ſucceſsfully carried into execution, gave me, for the firſt time, ſerious reflections upon my own ſituation, as we were in fact entirely in this man's hand. Ayto Aylo's ſervant, indeed, continued with me, but he was now out of his knowledge and influence, and, from many hints he had given, very deſirous of returning home: he ſeemed to have no great opinion of Woldo, and, indeed, had been in low ſpirits, and diſguſted with our journey, ſince he had ſeen the reception I firſt met with from Faſil at Bamba; but I had uſe for him till we ſhould arrive at the houſe of Shalaka Welled Amlac, which was in the middle of Maitſha, and in the way by which we were to return. I had therefore been very kind to him, allowing him to ride upon one of my mules all the way. I had given him ſome preſents likewiſe, and promiſed him more, ſo that he continued with me, though not very willingly, obſerving every thing, but ſaying little; however, to me it was plain that Woldo ſtood in awe of him, for fear probably of his maſter Faſil, for Aylo had over him a moſt abſolute influence, and Guebra Ehud

(Aylo's brother) had been preſent, when Aylo's ſervant ſet out with us from Bamba under charge of this Woldo.

To Woldo, too, I had been very attentive: I had anticipated what I ſaw were his wiſhes, by ſmall preſents and more conſiderable promiſes. I had told him plainly at Bamba, in preſence of Faſil's Fit-Auraris and Ayto Welleta Michael, (Ras Michael's nephew) that I would reward him in their ſight according to his behaviour; that I ſcarcely thanked him for his being barely faithful, for ſo he was accountable to his maſter, whoſe honour was pledged for my ſafety; but that I expected he would not attempt to impoſe upon me, nor ſuffer others to do ſo, nor terrify me unneceſſarily upon the road, nor obſtruct me in my purſuits, be ſulky, or refuſe to anſwer the inquires that I made about the countries through which we were to paſs. All this was promiſed, repromiſed, and repeatedly ſworn to, and the Fit-Auraris had aſſured me that he knew certainly this man would pleaſe me, and that Faſil was upon honour when he had choſen him to attend me, although he had then uſe for him in other buſineſs; and it is not leſs true, that, during the whole of our journey hitherto, he had behaved perfectly to the letter of his promiſe, and I had omitted no opportunity to gratify him by ſeveral anticipations of mine.

I HAD upon me a large beautiful red-ſilk ſaſh, which went ſix or ſeven times round, in which I carried my crooked knife and two piſtols; he had often admired the beauty of it, inquired where it was made, and what it might have coſt. I had anſwered often negligently and at random, and I had thought no more of it, as his inquiries had gone no further. The time which he had fixed upon was not yet

come,

come, and we ſhall preſently ſee how very dexterouſly he prolonged it.

We arrived, with theſe delays, pretty late at Goutto, (the village ſo called) and took up our lodgings in the houſe of a conſiderable perſon, who had abandoned it upon our approach, thinking us part of Faſil's army. Though this habitation was of uſe in protecting us from the poor, yet it hurt us by alarming, and ſo depriving us of the aſſiſtance of the opulent, ſuch as the preſent owner, who, if he had known we were ſtrangers from Gondar, would have willingly ſtaid and entertained us, being a relation and friend of Shalaka Welled Amlac.

As we heard diſtinctly the noiſe of the cataract, and had ſtill a full hour and a half of light, while they were in ſearch of a cow to kill, (the cattle having been all driven away or concealed) I determined to viſit the water-fall, leſt I ſhould be thereby detained the next morning. As Faſil's horſe was freſh, by not being rode, I mounted him inſtead of driving him before me, and took a ſervant of my own, and a man of the village whom Woldo procured for us, as I would not allow him to go himſelf. Being well armed, I thus ſet out, with the peaſant on foot, for the cataract; and, after riding through a plain, hard country, in ſome parts very ſtony, and thick-covered with trees, in ſomething more than half an hour's eaſy galloping all the way, my ſervant and I came ſtraight to the cataract, conducted there by the noiſe of the fall, while our guide remained at a conſiderable diſtance behind, not being able to overtake us.

THIS

THIS, known by the name of the Firſt Cataract of the Nile, did not by its appearance come up to the idea we had formed of it, being ſcarce ſixteen feet in height, and about ſixty yards over; but in many places the ſheet of water is interrupted, and leaves dry intervals of rock. The ſides are neither ſo woody nor verdant as thoſe of the cataract of the Aſſar; and it is in every ſhape leſs magnificent, or deſerving to be ſeen, than is the noble cataract at Alata before deſcribed, erroneouſly called the Second Cataract; for below this there is a water-fall, nearly weſt of the church of Boſkon Abbo, not much above the place where we ſwam our horſes over in May, and leſs than this firſt cataract of which I am ſpeaking, and nearer the ſource; there is another ſtill ſmaller before the Nile joins the river Gumetti, after falling from the plains of Sacala; and there are ſeveral ſtill ſmaller between the fountains and the junction of the Nile with the river Davola; theſe laſt mentioned, however, are very inſignificant, and appear only when the Nile is low: in the rainy ſeaſon, when the river is full, they ſcarcely are diſtinguiſhed by ruffling the water as it paſſes.

HAVING ſatisfied my curioſity at this cataract, I galloped back the ſame road that I had come, without having ſeen a ſingle perſon ſince I left Goutto. Faſil's horſe went very pleaſantly, he did not like the ſpur, indeed, but he did not need it. On our arrival we found a cow upon the point of being killed; there was no appearance of any ſuch to be found when I ſet out for the cataract, but the diligence and ſagacity of Woldo had overcome that difficulty. By a particular manner of crying through his hands applied to his mouth, he had contrived to make ſome beaſts anſwer him, who were hid in an unſuſpected bye-place, one of which being detected was killed without mercy.

It was now, I thought, the proper time to give Woldo a leſſon as to the manner in which I was reſolved to behave among the Agows, who I knew had been reduced to abſolute poverty by Faſil after the battle of Banja. I told him, that ſince the king had given me the ſmall territory of Geeſh, I was reſolved to take up my abode there for ſome time; and alſo, to make my coming more agreeable, it was my intention for that year to diſcharge them of any taxes which they paid the king, or their ſuperior Faſil, in whoſe places I then ſtood. “ Stay, ſays Woldo, don't be in ſuch a hurry, ſee firſt how they behave.”—“ No, ſaid I, I will begin by teaching them how to behave; I will not wait till their preſent miſery prompts them to receive ill (as they very naturally will do) a man who comes, as they may think, wantonly for curioſity only, to take from them and their ſtarved families the little Faſil has left them: the queſtion I aſk you then is briefly this, Do you conceive yourſelf obliged to obey me, as to what I ſhall judge neceſſary to direct you to do, during my journey to Geeſh and back again?” He anſwered, By all means, or he could never elſe return to his maſter Faſil. “ This, then, ſaid I, is the line of conduct I mean to purſue while I am among the Agows; you ſhall have money to buy every thing; you ſhall have money, or preſents, or both, to pay thoſe that ſerve us, or that ſhew us any kindneſs, and when we ſhall join your maſter Faſil (as I hope we ſhall do together) you ſhall tell him that I have received his majeſty's rent of the Agows of Geeſh, and I will enter a receipt for it in the king's deftar, or revenue-book at Gondar, if we ſee him there, as I expect we ſhall, upon my return. I, moreover,

moreover, undertake, that we ſhall gain more by this than by any other method we could have purſued." "There is one thing, however, ſays Woldo, you would not ſurely have me free them the dues paid by every village where a king's ſervant is employed to conduct ſtrangers, as I am you." "No, no, I do not go ſo near as that; we ſhall only buy what you would have otherwiſe taken by force for my uſe."

"Some years ago, ſays Woldo, when I was a young man, in king Yaſous's time, a white man, called Negadé Ras Georgis, had both Geeſh and Sacala given him by the king; he went there twice a-year, and ſtaid a month or more at a time; he was a great hunter and drinker, and a devil for the women; he not only ſpent what he got from the village, but all the money he brought from Gondar into the bargain; it was a jovial time, as I have heard; all was merriment: The firſt day he came there, ſome of the men of Sacala, out of ſport, diſputing with three of the Agows of Zeegam, fell to it with their knives and lances, and four men were killed in an inſtant upon the ſpot; fine ſtout fellows, every one like a lion; good men all of them; there are no ſuch days ſeen now, unleſs they come about when you are there, and then I ſhall have my ſhare of every thing". "Woldo, ſaid I, with all my heart; I ſhall be otherwiſe employed; but you ſhall be at perfect liberty to partake of every ſport, always excepting the diverſion of killing four men." But I had obſerved this day, with ſome ſurpriſe, that he doubted ſeveral times whether we were on the way to the fountains of the Nile or not; and I did not think this proſpect of entertainment which I held out to him was received with ſuch joy as I expected, or as if he meant to partake of it.

Strates had refuſed to go to the firſt cataract, having ſo violent an appetite that he could not abandon the cow; and, after my arrival, it was his turn to watch that night. When I was lain down to reſt in a little hovel like a hog's ſty, near where they were ſitting, I heard a warm diſpute among the ſervants, and, upon inquiry, found Strates was preparing ſteaks on a gridiron to make an entertainment for himſelf while the reſt were ſleeping; theſe, on the other hand, were reſolved to play him a trick to puniſh his gluttony. When the ſteaks were ſpread upon the gridiron, Woldo had undertaken to pour ſome fine duſt, or ſand, through the hole in the roof, which ſerved as a chimney; and this he had done with ſucceſs as often as Strates went to any diſtance from the fire. Not content, however, with the poſition in which he then was, but deſirous to do it more effectually, he attempted to change his place upon the roof where he ſtood, thinking it all equally ſtrong to bear him; but in this he was miſtaken; the part he was removing to ſuddenly gave way, and down he came upon the floor, bringing half the roof and part of the wall, together with a prodigious duſt, into the fire.

The ſurpriſe and ſight of his own danger made Woldo repeat ſome ejaculation to himſelf in Galla. My ſervants, who were waiting the ſucceſs of the ſcheme, cried, The Galla! the Galla! and Strates, who thought the whole army of wild Galla had ſurrounded the houſe, fell upon his face, calling Maruni! Maruni!—Spare me! ſpare me!—I was in a profound ſleep when rouſed by the noiſe of the roof, the falling of the man, and the cry of Galla! Galla! I ſtarted up, and laid hold of a muſket loaded with ſlugs, a bayonet at the end of it, and ran to the door, when the firſt thing I ſaw was Woldo examining his hurts, or burns, but without any arms. A laugh from without made me directly ſuppoſe what it was, and I was preſently fully ſatisfied by the figure Strates and Woldo made, covered with dirt and duſt from the roof; but, while they were entertaining themſelves with this fooliſh trick, the thatch that had fallen upon the fire began to flame, and it was with the utmoſt difficulty we extinguiſhed it, otherwiſe the whole village might have been burnt down.—I heard diſtinctly the noiſe of the cataract all this night.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Leave Goutto---Mountains of the Moon---Roguery of Woldo our Guide---Arrive at the Source of the Nile.

IT was the 3d of November, at eight o'clock in the morning, that we left the village of Goutto, and continued, for the firſt part of the day, through a plain country full of acacia-trees, and a few of other ſorts; but they were all pollards, that is, ſtunted, by having their tops cut off when young, ſo that they bore now nothing but ſmall twigs, or branches; theſe, too, ſeemed to have been lopped yearly. As there appeared no doubt that this had been done purpoſely, and for uſe, I aſked, and was informed, that we were now in the honey country, and that theſe twigs were for making large baſkets, which they hung upon trees at the ſides of their houſes, like bird-cages, for the bees to make their honey in them during the dry months; all the houſes we paſſed afterwards, and the trees near them, were furniſhed with theſe baſkets, having numerous hives of bees at work in them; the people themſelves ſeemed not to heed them, but they were an exceſſive plague to us by their ſtings during the day, ſo that it was only when we were out in the fields, or at night in the houſe, that we were free from this inconvenience.

The high mountain of Berfa now bore ſouth from us about ten miles diſtant; it reſembles, in ſhape, a gunner's wedge, and towers up to the very clouds amidſt the leſſer mountains of the Agow. Sacala is ſouth ſouth-eaſt. The country of the Agows extends from Berfa on the ſouth to the point of due weſt, in form of an amphitheatre, formed all round by mountains, of which that of Banja lies ſouth ſouth-weſt about nine miles off. The country of the Shangalla, beyond the Agows, lies weſt north-weſt. From this point all the territory of Goutto is full of villages, in which the fathers, ſons, and grandſons live together; each degree, indeed, in a ſeparate houſe, but near or touching each other, as in Maitſha, ſo that every village conſiſts of one family.

At three quarters paſt eight we croſſed a ſmall, but clear river, called Dee-ohha, or the River Dee. It is ſingular to obſerve the agreement of names of rivers in different parts of the world, that have never had communication together. The Dee is a river in the north of Scotland. The Dee runs through Cheſhire likewiſe in England; and Dee is a river here in Abyſſinia. Kelti is the name of a river in Monteith; Kelti, too, we found in Maitſha. Arno is a well-known river in Tuſcany; and we found another Arno, below Emfras, falling into the lake Tzana. Not one of theſe rivers, as far as I could obſerve, reſemble each other in any one circumſtance, nor have they a meaning or ſignification in any one language I know.

The church of Abbo is a quarter of a mile to our right, and the church of Eion Mariam bears eaſt by ſouth half a mile. We reſumed our journey at half paſt nine, and, after advancing a few minutes, we came in ſight of the ever-memorable field of Fagitta. At a quarter paſt ten we were pointing to the ſouth-eaſt, the two great clans of the Agow, Zeegam and Dengui, being to the ſouth-weſt; the remarkable mountain Davenanza is about eight miles off, bearing ſouth-eaſt by ſouth, and the courſe of the Nile is eaſt and weſt. Eaſtward ſtill from this is the high mountain of Adama, one of the ridges of Amid Amid, which form the entrance of a narrow valley on the eaſt ſide, as the mountains of Litchambara do on the weſt. In this valley runs the large river Jemma, riſing in the mountains, which, after paſſing thro' part of Maitſha, falls below into the Nile. The mountains from this begin to riſe high, whereas at Samſeen they are very low and inconſiderable. Adama is about ten miles from our preſent ſituation, which is alſo famous for a battle fought by Faſil's father, while governor of Damot, againſt the people of Maitſha, in which they were totally defeated.

We now deſcended into a large plain full of marſhes, bounded on the weſt by the Nile, and at ten and three quarters we croſſed the ſmall river Diwa, which comes from the eaſt and runs to the weſtward: though not very broad, it was by much the deepeſt river we had paſſed; the banks of earth being perpendicular and infirm, and the bottom foul and clayey, we were obliged to diſmount ourſelves, unload the mules, and carry our baggage over. This was a trouble-

ſome

ſome operation, though we ſucceeded at laſt. I often regretted to Woldo, that he could not here find ſome of the good people like the Agows at the ford of the Nile; but he ſhook his head, ſaying, Theſe are another ſort of ſtuff; we may be very thankful if they let us paſs ourſelves: in the flat country I do not wiſh to meet one man on this ſide the mountain Aformaſha.

In this plain, the Nile winds more in the ſpace of four miles than, I believe, any river in the world; it makes above a hundred turns in that diſtance, one of which advances ſo abruptly into the plain that we concluded we muſt paſs it, and were preparing accordingly, when we ſaw it make as ſharp a turn to the right, and run far on in a contrary direction, as if we were never to have met it again: the Nile is not here above 20 feet broad, and is nowhere above a foot deep. The church of Yaſous was above three quarters of a mile to the weſt.

At one o'clock we aſcended a ridge of low hills which terminates this plain to the ſouth. The mountains behind them are called Attata; they are covered thick with bruſhwood, and are cut through with gullies and beds of torrents. At half paſt one we were continuing S. E.; in a few minutes after we paſſed a clear but ſmall ſtream, called Minch, which ſignifies the Fountain. At two o'clock we arrived at the top of the mountain of Attata, and from this diſcovered the river Abola coming from the S. S. E. and in a few minutes paſſed another ſmall river called Giddili, which loſes itſelf immediately in a turn, or elbow, which the river Abola makes here below. At half paſt two we deſcended the mountain of Attata, and immediately at the foot of it croſſed a ſmall river of the ſame name, which terminates the territory of Attata; here, to the ſouth, it is indeed narrow, but very difficult to paſs by reaſon of its muddy bottom. The ſun all along the plain of Goutto had been very hot till now, and here ſo exceſſively, that it quite overcame us: what was worſe, Woldo declared himſelf ſo ill, that he doubted if he could go any farther, but believed he ſhould die at the next village. Though I knew too much of the matter to think him in any danger from real diſeaſe, I ſaw eaſily that he was infected with a counterfeit one, which I did not doubt was to give me as much trouble as a real one would have done.

At three o'clock, however, we puſhed on towards the S. E. and began to enter into the plain of Abola, one of the diviſions of the Agow. The plain, or rather valley, of Abola, is about half a mile broad for the moſt part, and nowhere exceeds a mile. The mountains that form it on the eaſt and weſt ſide are at firſt of no conſiderable height, and are covered with herbage and acacia-trees to the very top; but as they run ſouth, they increaſe in height, and become more rugged and woody. On the top of theſe are moſt delightful plains, full of excellent paſture; the mountains to the weſt are part of, or at leaſt join the mountain of Aformaſha, where, from a direction nearly S. E. they turn ſouth, and incloſe the villages and territory of Sacala, which lie at the foot of them, and ſtill lower, that is more to the weſtward, the ſmall village of Geeſh, where are the long-expected fountains of the Nile.

These mountains are here in the form of a creſcent; the river runs in the plain along the foot of this ridge, and along the ſide of it Kaſmati Faſil paſſed after his defeat at Fagitta. The mountains which form the eaſt ſide of this plain run parallel to the former in their whole courſe, and are part of, or at leaſt join the mountains of Litchambara, and theſe two, when behind Aformaſha, turn to the ſouth, and then to the S. W. taking the ſame form as they do, only making a greater curve, and incloſing them likewiſe in the form of a creſcent, the extremity of which terminates immediately above the ſmall lake Gooderoo, in the plain of Aſſoa, below Geeſh, and directly at the fountains of the Nile.

The river Abola comes out of the valley between theſe two ridges of mountains of Litchambara and Aformaſha, but does not riſe there; it has two branches, one of which hath its ſource in the weſtern ſide of Litchambara, near the center of the curve where the mountains turn ſouth; the other branch riſes on the mountain of Aformaſha, and the eaſt ſide of our road as we aſcended to the church of Mariam. Still behind theſe are the mountains of Amid Amid, another ridge which begin behind Samſeen, in the S. W. part of the province of Maitſha, though they become high only from the mountain of Adama, but they are in ſhape exactly like the former ridges, embracing them in a large curve in the ſhape of a creſcent.

Between Amid Amid and the ridge of Litchambara is the deep valley now known by the name of St George; what was its ancient, or Pagan name, I could not learn, Through the middle of this valley runs the Jemma, a river equal to the Nile, if not larger, but infinitely more rapid: after leaving the valley, it croſſes that part of Maitſha on the eaſt of the Nile, and loſes itſelf in that river below Samſeen, near the ford where our army paſſed in the unfortunate retreat of the month of May: its ſources or fountains are three; they riſe in the mountains of Amid Amid, and keep on cloſe to the eaſt ſide of them, till the river iſſues out of the valley into Maitſha.

This triple ridge of mountains diſpoſed one range behind the other, nearly in form of three concentric circles, ſeem to ſuggeſt an idea that they are the Mountains of the Moon, or the *Montes Lunæ* of antiquity, at the foot of which the Nile was ſaid to riſe; in fact, there are no others. Amid Amid may perhaps exceed half a mile in height, they certainly do not arrive at three quarters, and are greatly ſhort of that fabulous height given them by Kircher. Theſe mountains are all of them excellent ſoil, and everywhere covered with fine paſture; but as this unfortunate country had been for ages the theatre of war, the inhabitants have only ploughed and ſown the top of them out of the reach of enemies or marching armies. On the middle of the mountain are villages built of a white ſort of graſs, which makes them conſpicuous at a great diſtance; the bottom is all graſs, where their cattle feed continually under their eye; theſe, upon any alarm, they drive up to the top of the mountains out of danger. The hail lies often upon the top of Amid Amid for hours, but ſnow was never ſeen in this country, nor have they a word* in their languge for it. It is alſo remarkable, though we had often violent hail at Gondar, and even when the ſun was vertical, it never came but with the wind blowing directly from Amid Amid.

---

* By this is meant the Amharic, for in Geez the word for ſnow is Tilze: this may have been invented for tranſlating the ſcriptures.

At ten minutes paſt three o'clock we croſſed the ſmall river Iworra, in the valley of Abola; it comes from the eaſt, and runs weſtward into that river. At a quarter after four we halted at a houſe in the middle of the plain, or valley. This valley is not above a mile broad, the river being diſtant about a quarter, and runs at the foot of the mountains. This village, as indeed were all the others we had ſeen ſince our croſſing the Nile at Goutto, was ſurrounded by large, thick plantations, of that ſingular plant the Enſete, one of the moſt beautiful productions of nature, as well as moſt agreeable and wholeſome food of man. It is ſaid to have been brought by the Galla from Narea, firſt to Maitſha, then to Goutto, the Agows, and Damot, which laſt is a province on the ſouth ſide of the mountains of Amid Amid. This plant, and the root, called Denitch, (the ſame which is known in Europe by the name of the Jeruſalem artichoke, a root deſerving more attention than is paid to it in our country,) ſupply all theſe provinces with food.

We were but ſeldom lucky enough to get the people of the villages to wait our arrival; the fears of the march of the Galla, and the uncertainty of their deſtination, made them believe always we were detachments of that army, to which the preſence of Faſil's horſe driven conſtantly before us very much contributed: we found the village where we alighted totally abandoned, and in it only an earthern pot, with a large ſlice of the Enſete plant boiling in it; it was about a foot in length, and ten inches broad, and was almoſt ready

for

for eating: we had fortunately meat with us, and only wanting vegetables to complete our dinner. We appropriated to ourſelves, without ſcruple, this enſete; and, by way of reparation, I inſiſted upon leaving, at parting, a brick, or wedge of ſalt, which is uſed as ſmall money in Gondar, and all over Abyſſinia; it might be in value about a ſhilling.

On the 4th of November, at eight o'clock we left our ſmall village on the plain of Abola, without having ſeen any of the inhabitants; however, we were ſure there were among them ſome who were curious enough to wiſh to look at us, for, in walking late at night, I heard ſeveral voices ſpeaking low among the enſete-trees and canes. It was not poſſible to collect what they ſaid in the low tone in which they ſpoke; and I ſhould not probably have been much wiſer, had they ſpoken louder, as their language was that of their country, the Agow, of which I did not underſtand one word; however, I thought I could diſtinguiſh they were women, the men apprehending we were enemies having probably taken refuge in the mountains above. I did every thing poſſible to ſurround or ſurpriſe one or two of theſe people, that, by good uſage and preſents, we might reconcile them to us, and get the better of their fear; but it was all to no purpoſe; they fled much quicker than we could purſue them, as they knew the country, and it was not ſafe to follow them far into the wilderneſs, leſt we might ſtumble upon people who might miſinterpret our intentions.

I was determined to try whether, by taking away that ſcare-crow, Faſil's horſe, from before us, and riding him myſelf, things would change for the better: this I diſtinctly ſaw, that Woldo would have wiſhed the horſe to have gone rather without a rider, and this I had obſerved the night I went to the cataract from Goutto. Sitting on the king's ſaddle, or in his ſeat at Gondar, is high-treaſon; and Woldo thought, at all times, but now eſpecially, that his maſter was inferior to no king upon earth. I even attributed to that laſt expedition at Goutto his ſilence and apparent ſickneſs ever ſince; but in this laſt circumſtance I found afterwards that I was miſtaken: be that as it would, my plan was very different from Woldo's as to the horſe, he was become a favourite, and I was reſolved, in the courſe of my journey, to improve his talents ſo, that he ſhould make a better appearance on his return to Gondar, than he did when I received him from Faſil at Bamba. I compounded, as I conceived, with Woldo's ſcruples, by laying aſide Faſil's ſaddle, which was a very uneaſy one, beſides, that it had iron rings inſtead of ſtirrups; in ſhort, as this horſe was very beautiful, (as many of the Galla horſes are) and all of one colour, which was of lead, without any ſpot of white, I hoped to make him an acceptable preſent to the king, who was paſſionately fond of horſes. Here it may not be improper to obſerve, that all very great men in Abyſſinia chooſe to ride horſes of one colour only, which have no diſtinguiſhing mark whereby they may be traced in retreats, flights, or ſuch unlucky expeditions: It is the king alone in battle who rides upon a horſe diſtinguiſhed by his marks, and that on purpoſe that he may be known.

There were many villages in this valley which ſeemed to have eſcaped the havock of war, nor had they that air of poverty and miſery ſo apparent in all the other habitations we had ſeen. We were pointing nearly eaſt ſouth-eaſt, when we paſſed the ſmall river Googueri, which, like all the others on this ſide of the mountain, falls into the Abola. We then left the valley of Abola on our right, and began to travel along the ſides of the mountains on the weſt. At three quarters after eight we paſſed a violent torrent called Karnachiuli, which falls from north-eaſt into the Abola. At nine we again deſcended into the valley, and, a few minutes after, came to the banks of the Caccino, which flows from the north juſt above, and joins the Abola. Here we halted for a little to reſt our men, and to adjuſt thoroughly the minutes of our journey, that the whole might appear in a diſtinct manner in the map that I intended to make on my return to Gondar.

At half paſt nine we again ſet out, and, a few minutes after, paſſed the river Abola, which gives its name to the valley into which we had deſcended, and receives many leſſer ſtreams, and is of conſiderable breadth. I could diſcover no traces of fiſh either in it or in any river ſince we left the Aſſar, from which circumſtance I apprehend, that, in theſe torrents from the mountains, almoſt dry in ſummer, and which run with vaſt rapidity in winter, the ſpawn and fiſh are both deſtroyed in different ſeaſons by different cauſes.

After coaſting ſome little time along the ſide of the valley, we began to aſcend a mountain on the right, from which falls almoſt perpendicularly a ſmall, but very violent ſtream, one of the principal branches of the Abola, which empties itſelf into the Nile, together with the other branch, a ſtill more conſiderable ſtream, coming from eaſt ſouth-eaſt along the valley between Litchambara and Aformaſha. At eleven o'clock our courſe was ſouth by eaſt, and we paſſed near a church, dedicated to the Virgin, on our left. The climate ſeemed here moſt agreeably mild, the country covered with the moſt lively verdure, the mountains with beautiful trees and ſhrubs, loaded with extraordinary fruits and flowers. I found my ſpirits very much raiſed with theſe pleaſing ſcenes, as were thoſe of all my ſervants, who were, by our converſation, made geographers enough to know we were near approaching to the end of our journey. Both Strates and I, out of the *Lamb's* hearing, had ſhot a variety of curious birds and beaſts. All but Woldo ſeemed to have acquired new ſtrength and vigour. He continued in his air of deſpondency, and ſeemed every day to grow more and more weak. At a quarter paſt eleven we arrived at the top of the mountain, where we, for the firſt time, came in ſight of Sacala, which extends in the plain below from weſt to the point of ſouth, and there joins with the village cf Geeſh.

SACALA, full of ſmall low villages, which, however, had eſcaped the ravages of the late war, is the eaſtermoſt branch of the Agows, and famous for the beſt honey. The ſmall river Kebezza, running from the eaſt, ſerves as a boundary between Sacala and Aformaſha; after joining two other rivers, the Gometti and the Googueri, which we preſently came to, after a ſhort courſe nearly from S. E. to N. W. it falls into the Nile a little above its junction with the Abola.

AT three-quarters paſt eleven we croſſed the river Kebezza, and deſcended into the plain of Sacala; in a few minutes we alſo paſſed the Googueri, a more conſiderable ſtream than the former; it is about ſixty feet broad, and perhaps eighteen inches deep, very clear and rapid, running over a rugged, uneven bottom of black rock. At a quarter paſt twelve we halted on a ſmall eminence, where the market of Sacala is held every Saturday. Horned cattle, many of the greateſt beauty poſſible, with which all this country abounds; large aſſes, the moſt uſeful of all beaſts for riding or carriage; honey, butter, enſete for food, and a manufacture of the leaf of that plant, painted with different colours like Moſaic work, are here expoſed to ſale in great plenty; the butter and honey, indeed, are chiefly carried to Gondar, or to Buré; but Damot, Maitſha, and Gojam likewiſe take a conſiderable quantity of all theſe commodities.

At a quarter after one o'clock we paſſed the river Gumetti, the boundary of the plain: we were now aſcending a very ſteep and rugged mountain, the worſt paſs we had met on our whole journey. We had no other path but a road made by the ſheep or the goats, which did not ſeem to have been frequented by men, for it was broken, full of holes, and in other places obſtructed with large ſtones that ſeemed to have been there from the creation. It muſt be added to this, that the whole was covered with thick wood, which often occupied the very edge of the precipices on which we ſtood, and we were everywhere ſtopt and entangled by that execrable thorn the kantuffa, and ſeveral other thorns and brambles nearly as inconvenient. We aſcended, however, with great alacrity, as we conceived we were ſurmounting the laſt difficulty after the many thouſands we had already overcome. Juſt above this almoſt impenetrable wood, in a very romantic ſituation, ſtands St Michael, in a hollow ſpace like a nitch between two hills of the ſame height, and from which it is equally diſtant. This church has been unfrequented for many years; the excuſe they

make

make is, that they cannot procure frankincenſe, without which, it ſeems, their maſs or ſervice cannot be celebrated; but the truth is, they are ſtill Pagans; and the church, having been built in memory of a victory over them above a hundred years ago, is not a favourite object before their eyes, but a memorial of their inferiority and misfortune. This church is called St Michael Sacala, to diſtinguiſh it from another more to the ſouthward, called St Michael Geeſh.

AT three quarters after one we arrived at the top of the mountain, whence we had a diſtinct view of all the remaining territory of Sacala, the mountain Geeſh, and church of St Michael Geeſh, about a mile and a half diſtant from St Michael Sacala, where we then were. We ſaw, immediately below us, the Nile itſelf, ſtrangely diminiſhed in ſize, and now only a brook that had ſcarcely water to turn a mill. I could not ſatiate myſelf with the ſight, revolving in my mind all thoſe claſſical prophecies that had given the Nile up to perpetual obſcurity and concealment. The lines of the poet came immediately into my mind, and I enjoyed here, for the firſt time, the triumph which already, by the protection of Providence, and my own intrepidity, I had gained over all that were powerful, and all that were learned, ſince the remoteſt antiquity:—

Arcanum natura caput non prodidit ulli,
Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre;
Amovitque ſinus, et gentes maluit ortus
Mirari, quam nôſſe tuos.———

LUCAN.

I was awakened out of this delightful reverie by an alarm that we had loſt Woldo our guide. Though I long had expected ſomething from his behaviour, I did not think, for his own ſake, it could be his intention to leave us. The ſervants could not agree when they laſt ſaw him: Strates and Aylo's ſervant were in the wood ſhooting, and we found by the gun that they were not far from us; I was therefore in hopes that Woldo, though not at all fond of fire-arms, might be in their company; but it was with great diſſatisfaction I ſaw them appear without him. They ſaid, that, about an hour before, they had ſeen ſome extraordinary large, rough apes, or monkeys, ſeveral of which were walking upright, and all without tails; that they had gone after them thro' the wood till they could ſcarce get out again; but they did not remember to have ſeen Woldo at parting. Various conjectures immediately followed; ſome thought he had reſolved to betray and rob us; ſome conceived it was an inſtruction of Faſil's to him, in order to our being treacherouſly murdered; ſome again ſuppoſed he was ſlain by the wild beaſts, eſpecially thoſe apes or baboons, whoſe voracity, ſize, and fierce appearance were exceedingly magnified, eſpecially by Strates, who had not the leaſt doubt, if Woldo had met them, but that he would be ſo entirely devoured, that we might ſeek in vain without diſcovering even a fragment of him. For my part, I began to think that he had been really ill when he firſt complained, and that the ſickneſs might have overcome him upon the road; and this, too, was the opinion of Ayto Aylo's ſervant, who ſaid, however, with a ſignificant look, that he could not be far off; we therefore ſent him, and one of the men that drove the mules, back to ſeek after him; and they had not gone but a few hundred yards when they found him coming, but ſo decrepid, and ſo very ill, that he ſaid he could go no farther than the church, where he was poſitively reſolved to take up his abode that night. I felt his pulſe, examined every part about him, and ſaw, I thought evidently, that nothing ailed him. Without loſing my temper, however, I told him firmly, That I perceived he was an impoſtor; that he ſhould conſider that I was a phyſician, as he knew I cured his maſter's firſt friend, Welleta Yaſous: that the feeling of his hand told me as plain as his tongue could have done, that nothing ailed him; that it told me likewiſe he had in his heart ſome prank to play, which would turn out very much to his diſadvantage. He ſeemed diſmayed after this, ſaid little, and only deſired us to halt for a few minutes, and he ſhould be better; for, ſays he, it requires ſtrength in us all to paſs another great hill before we arrive at Geeſh.

"Look you, ſaid I, lying is to no purpoſe; I know where Geeſh is as well as you do, and that we have no more mountains or bad places to paſs through; therefore, if you chooſe to ſtay behind, you may; but to-morrow I ſhall inform Welleta Yaſous at Buré of your behaviour." I ſaid this with the moſt determined air poſſible, and left them, walking as hard as I could down to the ford of the Nile. Woldo remained above with the ſervants, who were loading their mules; he ſeemed to be perfectly cured of his lameneſs, and was in cloſe converſation with Ayto Aylo's ſervant for about ten minutes, which I did not chooſe to interrupt, as I ſaw that man was already in poſſeſſion of part of Woldo's ſecret. This being over, they all came down to me, as I was ſketching a branch of a yellow roſe-tree, a number of which hang over the ford.

The whole company paſſed without diſturbing me; and Woldo, ſeeming to walk as well as ever, aſcended a gentle-riſing hill, near the top of which is St Michael Geeſh. The Nile here is not four yards over, and not above four inches deep where we croſſed; it was indeed become a very trifling brook, but ran ſwiftly over a bottom of ſmall ſtones, with hard, black rock appearing amidſt them: it is at this place very eaſy to paſs, and very limpid, but, a little lower, full of inconſiderable falls; the ground riſes gently from the river to the ſouthward, full of ſmall hills and eminences, which you aſcend and deſcend almoſt imperceptibly. The whole company had halted on the north ſide of St Michael's church, and there I reached them without affecting any hurry.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, but the day had been very hot for ſome hours, and they were ſitting in the ſhade of a grove of magnificent cedars, intermixed with ſome very large and beautiful cuſſo-trees, all in the flower; the men were lying on the graſs, and the beaſts fed, with the burdens on their backs, in moſt luxuriant herbage. I called for my herbary *, to lay the roſe-branch I had in my hand ſmoothly, that it might dry without ſpoiling the ſhape; having only drawn its general form, the piſtil and ſtamina, the finer parts of which (though very neceſſary in claſſing the plant) crumble and fall off, or take different forms in drying, and therefore ſhould always be ſecured by drawing while green. I juſt ſaid indifferently to Woldo in paſſing, that I was glad to ſee him recovered; that he would preſently be well, and ſhould fear nothing. He then got up,

---

* Hortus Siccus, a large book for extending and preſerving dry plants.

and deſired to ſpeak with me alone, taking Aylo's ſervant along with him. "Now, ſaid I, very calmly, I know by your face you are going to tell me a lie. I do ſwear to you ſolemnly, you never, by that means, will obtain any thing from me, no not ſo much as a good word; truth and good behaviour will get you every thing; what appears a great matter in your ſight is not perhaps of ſuch value in mine; but nothing except truth and good behaviour will anſwer to you; now I know for a certainty you are no more ſick than I am."—"Sir, ſaid he, with a very confident look, you are right; I did counterfeit; I neither have been, nor am I at preſent any way out of order; but I thought it beſt to tell you ſo, not to be obliged to diſcover another reaſon that has much more weight with me why I cannot go to Geeſh, and much leſs ſhew myſelf at the ſources of the Nile, which I confeſs are not much beyond it, though I declare to you there is ſtill a *hill* between you and thoſe ſources."—"And pray, ſaid I calmly, what is this mighty reaſon? have you had a dream, or a viſion in that trance you fell into when you lagged behind below the church of St Michael Sacala?" "No, ſays he, it is neither trance, nor dream, nor devil either; I wiſh it was no worſe; but you know as well as I, that my maſter Faſil defeated the Agows at the battle of Banja. I was there with my maſter, and killed ſeveral men, among whom ſome were of the Agows of this village Geeſh, and you know the uſage of this country, when a man, in theſe circumſtances, falls into their hands, his blood muſt pay for their blood.

I BURST out into a violent fit of laughter which very much diſconcerted him. "There, ſaid I, did not I ſay to you it was a lie that you was going to tell me? do not think I diſbelieve or diſpute with you the vanity of having killed men; many men were ſlain at that battle; ſomebody muſt, and you may have been the perſon who ſlew them; but do you think that I can believe that Faſil, ſo deep in that account of blood, could rule the Agows in the manner he does, if he could not put a ſervant of his in ſafety among them 20 miles from his reſidence; do you think I can believe this?" "Come, come, ſaid Aylo's ſervant to Woldo, did you not hear that truth and good behaviour will get you every thing you aſk? Sir, continues he, I ſee this affair vexes you, and what this fooliſh man wants will neither make you richer nor poorer; he has taken a great deſire for that crimſon ſilk-ſaſh which you wear about your middle. I told him to ſtay till you went back to Gondar; but he ſays he is to go no farther than to the houſe of Shalaka Welled Amlac in Maitſha, and does not return to Gondar; I told him to ſtay till you had put your mind at eaſe, by ſeeing the fountains of the Nile, which you are ſo anxious about. He ſaid, after that had happened, he was ſure you would not give it him, for you ſeemed to think little of the cataract at Goutto, and of all the fine rivers and churches which he had ſhewn you; except the head of the Nile ſhall be finer than all theſe, when, in reality, it will be juſt like another river, you will then be diſſatisfied, and not give him the ſaſh."

I THOUGHT there was ſomething very natural in theſe ſuſpicions of Woldo; beſides, he ſaid he was certain that, if ever the ſaſh came into the ſight of Welled Amlac, by ſome means or other he would get it into his hands. This rational diſcourſe had pacified me a little; the ſaſh was a handſome one; but it muſt have been fine indeed to have ſtood for a minute between me and the accompliſhment of my wiſhes. I laid my hand then upon the piſtols that ſtuck in my girdle, and drew them out to give them to one of my ſuite, when Woldo, who apprehended it was for another purpoſe, ran ſome paces back, and hid himſelf behind Aylo's ſervant. We were all diverted at this fright, but none ſo much as Strates, who thought himſelf revenged for the alarm he had given him by falling through the roof of the houſe at Goutto. After having taken off my ſaſh, "Here is your ſaſh, Woldo, ſaid I; but mark what I have ſaid, and now moſt ſeriouſly repeat to you, Truth and good behaviour will get any thing from me; but if, in the courſe of this journey, you play one trick more, though ever ſo trifling, I will bring ſuch a vengeance upon your head that you ſhall not be able to find a place to hide it in, when not the ſaſh only will be taken from you, but your ſkin alſo will follow it: remember what happened to the ſeis at Bamba."

He took the ſaſh, but ſeemed terrified at the threat, and began to make apologies. "Come, come, ſaid I, we underſtand each other; no more words; it is now late, loſe no more time, but carry me to Geeſh, and the head of the Nile directly, without preamble, and ſhew me the hill that ſeparates me from it. He then carried me round to the ſouth ſide of the church, out of the grove of trees that ſurrounded it, "This is the hill, ſays he, looking archly, that, when you was on the other ſide of it, was between you and the fountains of the Nile; there is no other; look at that hillock of green ſod in the middle of that watery ſpot, it is in that the two fountains of the Nile are to be found: Geeſh is on the face of the rock where yon green trees are: if you go the length of the fountains pull off your ſhoes as you did the other day, for theſe people are all Pagans, worſe than thoſe that were at the ford, and they believe in nothing that you believe, but only in this river, to which they pray every day as if it were God; but this perhaps you may do likewiſe." Half undreſſed as I was by loſs of my ſaſh, and throwing my ſhoes off, I ran down the hill towards the little iſland of green ſods, which was about two hundred yards diſtant; the whole ſide of the hill was thick grown over with flowers, the large bulbous roots of which appearing above the ſurface of the ground, and their ſkins coming off on treading upon them, occaſioned two very ſevere falls before I reached the brink of the marſh; I after this came to the iſland of green turf, which was in form of an altar, apparently the work of art, and I ſtood in rapture over the principal fountain which riſes in the middle of it.

It is eaſier to gueſs than to deſcribe the ſituation of my mind at that moment—ſtanding in that ſpot which had baffled the genius, induſtry, and inquiry of both ancients and moderns, for the courſe of near three thouſand years. Kings had attempted this diſcovery at the head of armies, and each expedition was diſtinguiſhed from the laſt, only by the difference of the numbers which had periſhed, and agreed alone in the diſappointment which had uniformly, and without exception, followed them all. Fame, riches, and honour, had been held out for a ſeries of ages to every individual of thoſe myriads theſe princes commanded, without having produced one man capable of gratifying the curioſity of his ſovereign, or wiping off this ſtain upon the enterpriſe and abilities of mankind, or adding this deſideratum for the encouragement of geography. Though a mere private Briton, I triumphed here, in my own mind, over kings and their armies; and every compariſon was leading nearer and nearer to preſumption, when the place itſelf where I ſtood, the object of my vain-glory, ſuggeſted what depreſſed my ſhort-lived triumphs. I was but a few minutes arrived at the ſources of the Nile, through numberleſs dangers and ſufferings, the leaſt of which would have overwhelmed me but for the continual goodneſs and protection of Providence; I was, however, but then half through my journey ,and all thoſe dangers which I had already paſſed, awaited me again on my return. I found a deſpondency gaining ground faſt upon me, and blaſting the crown of laurels I had too raſhly woven for myſelf. I reſolved therefore to divert, till I could on more ſolid reflection overcome its progreſs.

I SAW Strates expecting me on the ſide of the hill. "Strates, ſaid I, faithful ſquire, come and triumph with your Don Quixote at that iſland of Barataria where we have wiſely and fortunately brought ourſelves; come and triumph with me over all the kings of the earth, all their armies, all their philoſophers, and all their heroes."—"Sir, ſays Strates, I do not underſtand a word of what you ſay, and as little what you mean: you very well know I am no ſcholar; but you had much better leave that bog, come into the houſe, and look after Woldo; I fear he has ſomething further to ſeek than your ſaſh, for he has been talking with the old devil-worſhipper ever ſince we arrived."—"Did they ſpeak ſecretly together, ſaid I?"—"Yes, Sir, they did, I aſſure you."—"And in whiſpers, Strates!"—"As for that, replied he, they need not have been at the pains; they underſtand one another, I ſuppoſe, and the devil their maſter underſtands them both; but as for me I comprehend their diſcourſe no more than if it was Greek, *as they ſay*. Greek!

ſays he, I am an aſs; I ſhould know well enough what they ſaid if they ſpoke Greek."—"Come, ſaid I, take a draught of this excellent water, and drink with me a health to his majeſty king George III. and a long line of princes." I had in my hand a large cup made of a cocoa-nut-ſhell, which I procured in Arabia, and which was brim-full. He drank to the king ſpeedily and chearfully, with the addition of, "Confuſion to his enemies," and toſſed up his cap with a loud huzza. "Now friend, ſaid I, here is to a more humble, but ſtill a ſacred name, here is to—Maria!" He aſked if that was the Virgin Mary? I anſwered, "In faith, I believe ſo, Strates." He did not ſpeak, but only gave a humph of diſapprobation.

The day had been very hot, and the altercation I had with Woldo had occaſioned me to ſpeak ſo much that my thirſt, without any help from curioſity, led me to theſe frequent libations at this long ſought-for ſpring, the moſt ancient of all altars. "Strates, ſaid I, here is to our happy return. Come, friend, you are yet two toaſts behind me; can you ever be ſatiated with this excellent water?"—"Look you, Sir, ſays he very gravely, as for king George I drank to him with all my heart, to his wife, to his children, to his brothers and ſiſters, God bleſs them all! Amen;—but as for the Virgin Mary, as I am no Papiſt, I beg to be excuſed from drinking healths which *my church* does not drink. As for our happy return, God knows, there is no one wiſhes it more ſincerely than I do, for I have been long weary of this beggarly country. But you muſt forgive me if I refuſe to drink any more water. They ſay theſe ſavages pray over that hole every morning to the devil, and I am afraid I feel his horns in my belly already, from the great draught of that helliſh water I drank firſt."—It was, indeed, as cold water as ever I taſted. "Come, come, ſaid I, don't be peeviſh, I have but one toaſt more to drink."—"Peeviſh, or not peeviſh, replied Strates, a drop of it never again ſhall croſs my throat: there is no humour in this; no joke; ſhew us ſomething pleaſant as you uſed to do; but there is no jeſt in meddling with devil-worſhippers, witchcraft, and inchantments, to bring ſome diſeaſe upon one's ſelf here, ſo far from home in the fields. No, no, as many toaſts in wine as you pleaſe, or better in brandy, but no more water for Strates. I am ſure I have done myſelf harm already with theſe follies—God forgive me!"—"Then, ſaid I, I will drink it alone, and you are henceforward unworthy of the name of Greek; you do not even deſerve that of a Chriſtian." Holding the full cup then to my head, "Here is to Catharine, empreſs of all the Ruſſias, and ſucceſs to her heroes at Paros; and hear my prediction from this altar to-day, Ages ſhall not paſs, before this ground, whereon I now ſtand, will become a flouriſhing part of her dominions."

HE leaped on this a yard from the ground. "If the old gentleman has whiſpered you this, ſays he, out of the well, he has not kept you long time waiting; tell truth and ſhame the devil, is indeed the proverb, but truth is truth, wherever it comes from; give me the cup, I will drink that health though I ſhould die." He then held out both his hands. "Strates, ſaid I, be in no ſuch haſte; remember the water is inchanted by devil-worſhippers; there is no jeſting with theſe, and you are far from home, and in the fields, you may catch ſome diſeaſe, eſpecially if you drink the Virgin Mary; God forgive you. Remember the horns the firſt draught produced; they may with this come entirely through and through."—"The cup, the cup, ſays he, and—fill it full; I defy the devil, and truſt in St George and the dragon.—Here is to Catharine, empreſs of all the Ruſſias, confuſion to her enemies, and damnation to all at Paros."—"Well, friend, ſaid I, you was long in reſolving, but you have done it at laſt to ſome purpoſe; I am ſure I did not drink damnation to all at Paros."—"Ah, ſays he, but *I did*, and will do it again—Damnation to all at Paros, and Cyprus, and Rhodes, Crete, and Mytilene into the bargain: Here it goes with all my heart. Amen, ſo be it."—"And who do you think, ſaid I, are at Paros?"—"Pray, who ſhould be there, ſays he, but Turks and devils, the worſt race of monſters and oppreſſors in the Levant; I have been at Paros myſelf; was you ever there?"—"Whether I was ever there or not is no matter, ſaid I; the empreſs's fleet, and an army of Ruſſians, are now poſſibly there; and here you, without provocation, have drank damnation to the Ruſſian fleet and army who have come ſo far from home, and are at this moment ſword in hand to reſtore you to your liberty, and the free exerciſe of your religion; did not I tell you, you was no Greek, and ſcarcely deſerved the name of Chriſtian?"—"No, no, Sir, cries Strates, for God's ſake do not ſay ſo, I would rather die. I did not underſtand you about Paros; there was no malice in my heart againſt the Ruſſians. God will bleſs them, and my folly can do them no harm—Huzza, Catharine, and victory!" whilſt he toſſed his cap into the air.

A NUMBER of the Agows had appeared upon the hill, juſt before the valley, in ſilent wonder what Strates and I were doing at the altar. Two or three only had come down to the edge of the ſwamp, had ſeen the grimaces and action of Strates, and heard him huzza; on which they had aſked Woldo, as he entered into the village, what was the meaning of all this? Woldo told them, that the man was out of his ſenſes, and had been bit by a mad dog; which reconciled them immediately to us. They, moreover, ſaid, he would be infallibly cured by the Nile; but the cuſtom, after meeting with ſuch a misfortune, was to drink the water in the morning faſting. I was very well pleaſed both with this turn Woldo gave the action, and the remedy we ſtumbled upon by mere accident, which diſcovered a connection, believed to ſubſiſt at this day, between this river and its ancient governor the dog-ſtar.

CHAP. XIII.

Attempts of the Ancients to diſcover the Source of the Nile—No Diſcovery made in latter Times—No Evidence of the Jeſuits having arrived there—Kircher's Account fabulous—Diſcovery completely made by the Author.

FAR in antiquity as hiſtory or tradition can lead us, farther ſtill beyond the reach of either, (if we believe it was the firſt ſubject of hieroglyphics) begins the inquiry into the origin, cauſe of increaſe, and courſe, of this famous river. It is one of the few phænomena in natural hiſtory that ancient philoſophers employed themſelves in inveſtigating, and people of all ranks ſeemed to have joined in the reſearch with a degree of perſeverance very uncommon; but ſtill this diſcovery, though often attempted under the moſt favourable circumſtances, has as conſtantly miſcarried; it has baffled the endeavours of all ages, and

at

at laſt come down, as great a ſecret as ever, to theſe latter times of bold and impartial inquiry.

THOUGH Egypt was not created by the Nile, it was the firſt part that received benefit from it; it was there, in the time of its overflowing, that it appeared in all its beauty, and Egypt meaſured its proſperity or deſolation by the abundance or ſcantineſs of this ſtream. It was not, however, in Egypt the inquiries into the time and cauſe of its inundation began; all theſe were ſettled and reduced to rule before a city was built within the reach of the inundation.

MAN, that knew not the cauſe, was alſo ignorant of the limits of that inundation, having only in his mind a tradition of deluges that had deſtroyed the earth, traces of which appeared on every hill. He was with reaſon aſtoniſhed to ſee, that, wild and wide as the torrent appeared, it was ſubject to the controul of ſome power that prohibited it from irregularity in the time of its coming, and forbade it to deſtroy the land it was deſtined to enrich; they ſaw it ſubſide within its banks, and overflow no more after it had afforded to huſbandry the utmoſt advantage it could receive. But what the controuling power was they knew not, conſequently could never divine whether this regularity was tranſitory or perpetual; whether it was not liable, at ſome time, to break its bonds, and ſweep both man and his labours together into the ocean.

WHETHER the Nile was conſtant to its time of riſing, whether it did not revolve in ſome cycle or period, or whether, arrived at a certain number of inundations, it was not to ſtop and overflow no more, was what could only be determined by the inveſtigation of the cauſe, and the obſervations of a ſeries of years. Before this was thoroughly ſettled and known, the farmer might perhaps cultivate the plain of Egypt, but would not build there; he would fix his dwelling on the mountain in defiance of the flood; and that this was ſo, is evident from what we ſaw at Thebes, which the Aborigines did not build, as we ſee thouſands of caves dug out of ſolid rock that were the dwellings of the firſt inhabitants, the Troglodytes, beyond Meroë.

The philoſophers of *Meroë* ſeem therefore to have been the firſt that undertook the compiling a ſeries of obſervations, which ſhould teach their poſterity the proper times in which they could ſettle in, and cultivate Egypt, without fear of danger from the Nile. That iſland, full of flocks and ſhepherds, under a ſky perpetually cloudleſs, having a twilight of ſhort duration, was placed between the Nile and Aſtaboras, where the two rivers collect the waters that fall in the eaſt and the weſt of Ethiopia, and mix together in a latitude where the tropical rains ceaſe; this land was too high to be overflowed by the Nile, but near enough to behold every alteration in that river's increaſe from the inſtant it happened.

Sirius, the brighteſt ſtar in the Heavens, probably the largeſt, perhaps the neareſt to us, in either caſe the moſt obvious and uſeful for the preſent purpoſe, was immediately vertical to Meroë; and it did not long eſcape obſervation, that the heliacal riſing of the dog-ſtar was found to be the inſtant when all Egypt was to prepare for the reception of a ſtranger-flood, without which the huſbandman's labour and expectation of harveſt were in vain. The fields were duſty and deſert, the farms without tenants, the tenants without ſeed, the houſes perhaps ſituated in the middle of the inundation, when, at a ſtated time, this moſt brilliant ſign ſhone forth to warn the maſter to procure a peaſant for his field, the peaſant to procure ſeed for his tenement, and the ſtranger to remove his habitation from a ſituation ſoon deſtined to be laid wholly under water.

Nothing could be more natural than the inquiries how the encreaſe of the flood was thus connected with the riſing of the dog-ſtar; many uſeful diſcoveries were therefore probably made in ſearch after this, but the cauſe of the inundation remained ſtill undiſcovered; at laſt the effects being found regular, and the efficient cauſe inſcrutable, no wonder if gratitude transferred to the ſtar a portion of reſpect for the benefits they were perſuaded they received from its influence. Though theſe obſervations were ſuch as concerned Egypt and Nubia alone, yet from Egypt they paſſed as objects proper for inquiry, as problems of the greateſt conſequence to philoſophers, and as phænomena worthy the attention of all that ſtudied nature.

A great ſtep towards the accounting for theſe phænomena was believed to be the diſcovery of the Nile's ſource, and this, as it was attended with very conſiderable difficulties, was thought therefore to be a proper object of inveſtigation, even by kings, who diſcovered nations by conquering them, and by their power, revenue, and armies, removed moſt of thoſe obſtacles which, ſucceeding each others in detail, weary the diligence, overcome the courage, and baffle the endeavours of the moſt intrepid and perſevering travellers.

Seſostris, one of the earlieſt and greateſt conquerors of antiquity, is mentioned, amidſt all his victories, earneſtly to have deſired to penetrate to the head of the Nile, as a glory he preferred to almoſt univerſal monarchy:—

Venit ad occaſum, mundique extrema Seſoſtris,
Et Pharios currus regum cervicibus egit:
Antè tamen veſtros amnes Rhodanúmque, Padúmque,
Quàm Nilum de fonte bibit.———

Lucan.

Cambyses' attempt to penetrate into Ethiopia, and the defeat of his ſchemes, I have already narrated at ſufficient length *.

———*Veſanus in ortus*
Cambyſes longi populos pervenit ad ævi,
Defectuſque epulis, & paſtus cæde ſuorum
Ignoto te, Nile, redit.——— Lucan.

The attention paid by Alexander, the next prince who attempted an expedition towards theſe unknown fountains, merits a little more of our conſideration. After he had conquered Egypt, and was arrived at the temple of Jupiter Ammon, (the celebrated and ancient deity of the ſhepherds) in the Theban deſert, the firſt queſtion he aſked was concerning the ſpot where the Nile roſe. Having received from the prieſts ſufficient directions for attempting the diſcovery, he is ſaid, as the next very ſenſible ſtep, to have choſen natives of Ethiopia as the likelieſt people to ſucceed in the ſearch he had commanded them to make:—

---

* Vol. II. b. ii. chap. v.

Summus Alexander regum, quem Memphis adorat,
Invidit Nilo, miſitque per ultima terræ
Æthiopum lectos: illos rubicunda peruſti
Zona poli tenuit, Nilum videre calentem.

LUCAN.

THESE Ethiopians, parting from their temple in the deſort of Elvah, or Oaſis, or, which will come to the ſame thing, from the banks of the Nile, or Thebes, would hold nearly the ſame courſe as Poncet had done, till they fell in with the Nile about Moſcho in the kingdom of Dongola; they would continue the ſame route till they came to Halfaia, where the Bahar el Abiad (or white river) joins the Nile at Hojila, five miles above that town; and, to avoid the mountains of Kuara, they would continue on the weſt ſide of the Nile, between it and the Bahar el Abiad; and, keeping the Nile cloſe on their left, they would follow its direction ſouth to the mountains of Fazuclo, through countries where its courſe muſt neceſſarily be known. After having paſſed the great chain of mountains, called Dyre and Tegla, between lat. 11° and 12° N. where are the great cataracts, they again came into the flat country of the Gongas, as far as Bizamo, nearly in 9° N. there the river, leaving its hitherto conſtant direction, N. and S. turns due E. and ſurrounds Gojam.

IT is probable the diſcoverers, always looking for it to the ſouth, took this unuſual ſudden turn eaſt to be only a winding of the river, which would ſoon be compenſated by an equal return to the weſt where they would meet it again; they therefore continued their journey ſouth, till near the line, and never ſaw it more, as they could have no poſſible notion it had turned back behind them, and that they had leſt it as far north as lat. 11° They reported then to Alexander what was truth, that they had aſcended the Nile as far ſouth as lat. 9°, where it unexpectedly took its courſe to the eaſt, and was ſeen no more. The river, moreover, was not known, nor to be heard of near the Line, or farther ſouthward, nor was it diminiſhed in ſize, nor had it given any ſymptom they were near its ſource; they had found the Nile *calentem*, (warm) while they expected its riſe among melting ſnows.

THIS diſcovery (for ſo far it was one) of the courſe of the river to the eaſt, ſeems to have made a ſtrong impreſſion on Alexander's mind, ſo that when he arrived at near the head of the Indus, then ſwelled with the thawing ſnows of mount Caucaſus, and overflowing in ſummer, he thought he was arrived at the ſource of this famous river the Nile which he had before ſeen in the weſt, and rejoiced at it exceedingly, as the nobleſt of his atchievements *; he immediately wrote to acquaint his mother of it; but being ſoon convinced of his error, and being far above propagating a falſehood, even for his own glory, he inſtantly eraſed what he had wrote upon that ſubject. This however did not entirely diſſatisfy Alexander, for he propoſed an expedition in perſon towards theſe fountains, if he had returned from India in ſafety.

---

* Arrianus de Exped. Alexandri, lib. vi.

———Non illi flamma, nec undæ,
Nec ſterilis Libye, nec Syrticus obſtitit Ammon.
Iſſet in occaſus, mundi devexa ſecutus:
Ambiſſetque polos, Nilumque a fonte bibiſſet:
Occurrit ſuprema dies, naturaque ſolum
Hunc potuit finem veſano ponere regi.

Lucan.

It muſt no doubt ſeem prepoſterous to thoſe that are not very converſant with the claſſics, that a prince ſo well inſtructed as Alexander himſelf was, who had with him in his army many philoſophers, geographers, and aſtronomers, and was in conſtant correſpondence with Ariſtotle, a man of almoſt univerſal knowledge, that, after having ſeen the Nile in Egypt coming from the ſouth, he ſhould think he was arrived at the head of it while on the banks of the Indus, ſo far to the N. E. of its Ethiopian courſe. This difficulty, however, has a very eaſy ſolution in the prejudices of thoſe times. The ancients were incorrigible as to their error in opinion concerning two ſeas.

The Caſpian Sea they had ſailed through in ſeveral directions, and had almoſt marched round it; and whilſt they conquered kingdoms between it and the ſea, its water was ſweet, it neither ebbed nor flowed, and yet they moſt ridiculouſly would have it to be part of the ocean. On the other hand, they obſtinately perſiſted in believing that, from the eaſt coaſt of Africa, about latitude 15° ſouth, a neck of land ran eaſt and north-eaſt, and joined the peninſula of India, and by that means made this part of the ocean a lake. In vain ſhips of different nations ſailed for ages to Sofala, and ſaw no ſuch land; this only made them remove the neck of land further to the ſouth; and though Eudoxus had ſailed from the Red Sea around the Cape of Good Hope, which muſt have totally deſtroyed the poſſibility of the exiſtence of that land ſuppoſed to join the two continents, rather than allow this, they neglected the information of this navigator, and treated it as a fable.

IT was the conſtant opinion of the Greeks, that no river could riſe in the torrid zone, as alſo, that the melting of ſnow was the cauſe of the overflowing of all rivers in the heat of ſummer, and ſo of the Nile among the reſt; when, therefore, Alexander heard from his diſcoverers, that the Nile, about latitude 9°, ran ſtraight to the eaſt, and returned no more, he imagined the river's courſe was eaſtward through the imaginary neck of land incloſing the imaginary lake, and joining the peninſula of India, and that the river, after it had croſſed, continued north till it came within reach of the thawing of the ſnows of Mount Caucaſus; and this was alſo the opinion of Ptolemy the geographer.

PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS, the ſecond of thoſe princes who had ſucceeded to the throne of Alexander in Egypt, was the next who marched into Ethiopia with an army againſt the Shangalla. His object was not only to diſcover the ſource of the Nile, but alſo to procure a perpetual ſupply of elephants to enable him to cope with the kings of Syria. The ſucceſs of this expedition we have related in the firſt volume, book ii. chap. v.

PTOLEMY EVERGETES, his ſucceſſor, in the 27th year of his reign, being in peace with all his neighbours, undertook an expedition to Ethiopia. His deſign was certainly to diſcover the fountains of the Nile, in which he had probably ſucceeded had he not miſtaken the river itſelf. He ſuppoſed the Siris, now the Tacazzé, was the Nile, and, aſcending in the direction of its ſtream, he came to Axum, the capital of the province of Siré and of Ethiopia. But the ſtory he tells about the ſnow which he found knee-deep on the mountains of Samen, makes me queſtion whether he ever croſſed the Siris, or was himſelf an ocular witneſs of what he ſays he obſerved there.

Cæsar, between the acquiſition of a rich and powerful kingdom, and the enjoyment of the fineſt woman in the world, the queen of it, is ſaid to have employed ſo intereſting an interval in a calm inquiry after the ſource of this river, and, in ſo doing at ſuch a time, ſurely has paid it a greater compliment than it ever yet received from any that attempted the diſcovery. On that night, which completed the deſtruction of the Egyptian monarchy, it is ſaid this was the topic upon which he entertained the learned of Alexandria at ſupper; addreſſing himſelf to Achoreus, high prieſt of the Nile, he ſays,

——————*Nihil eſt, quod noſcere malim,*
Quam fluvii cauſas, per ſecula tanta latentis,
Ignotumque caput: ſpes ſit mihi certa videndi
Niliacos fontes, bellum civile relinquam.

Lucan.

The poet here pays Cæſar a compliment upon his curioſity, or deſire of knowledge, very much at the expence of his patriotiſm; for he makes him declare, in ſo many words, that he conſidered making war with his country as the greateſt pleaſure of his life, never to be abandoned, but for that ſuperior gratification—the diſcovery of the fountains of the Nile.

Achoreus, proud of being referred to on ſuch a ſubject by ſuch a perſon, enters into a detail of information.

> *Quæ tibi noſcendi Nilum, Romane, cupido eſt,*
> *Hæc Phariis, Perſiſque fuit, Macedumque tyrannis:*
> *Nullaque non ætas voluit conferre futuris*
> *Notitiam: ſed vincit adhuc natura latendi.* LUCAN.

Nero, as we are told, ſent two centurions in ſearch of this river, and on their return they made their report in preſence of Seneca, who does not ſeem to have greatly diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his inquiries. They reported, that after having gone a very long way, they came to a king of Ethiopia, who furniſhed them with neceſſaries and aſſiſtance, and with his recommendations they arrived at ſome other kingdoms next to theſe, and then came to immenſe lakes, the end of which was unknown to the natives, nor did any one ever hope to find it: this was all the ſatisfaction Nero procured, and it is probable theſe centurions went not far, but were diſcouraged, and turned back with a trumped-up ſtory invented to cover their want of ſpirit, for we know now that there are no ſuch lakes between Egypt and the ſource of the Nile, but the lake Tzana, or Dembea, and while on the banks of this, they might have ſeen the country beyond, and on every ſide of it *; but I rather think no ſuch attempt was made, unleſs they endeavoured to paſs the country of the Shangalla about the end of June or July, when that province, as I have already ſaid, is abſolutely impaſſible, by the rapid vegetation of the trees, and the ground being all laid under water, which they might have miſtaken for a ſeries of lakes.

---

* Another reaſon why I think this journey of the centurions is fictitious is, that they ſay the diſtance between Syene and Meroë is 660 miles. Plin. lib. 6. cap. 29.

After all theſe great efforts, the learned of antiquity began to look upon the diſcovery as deſperate, and not to be attained, for which reaſon both poets and hiſtorians ſpeak of it in a ſtrain of deſpondency:—

Secreto de fonte cadens; qui ſemper inani
Quaerendus ratione latet, nec contigit ulli,
Hoc vidiſſe caput, fertur ſine teſte creatus.

Claudian.

And Pliny, as late as the time of Trajan, ſays, that theſe fountains were in his time utterly unknown—*Nilus incertis ortus fontibus, it per deſerta et ardentia, et immenſo longitudinis ſpatio ambulans* [*],—nor was there any other attempt made later by the ancients.

From this it is obvious, that none of the ancients ever made this diſcovery of the ſource of the Nile. They gave it up entirely, and *caput Nili quaerere* became a proverb, marking the difficulty, or rather the impoſſibility, of any undertaking. Let us now examine the pretenſions of the moderns.

---

[*] Pliny, Nat. Hiſt. lib. v. cap. 9.

The firſt in latter days who viſited Abyſſinia was a monk, and at the ſame time a merchant; he was ſent by Nonnoſus, ambaſſador of the emperor Juſtin, in the fifth year of the reign of that prince, that is A. D. 522. He is called Coſmas the hermit, as alſo Indoplauſtes. Many have thought that this name was given him from his having travelled much in India, properly ſo called; but we have no evidence that Coſmas was ever in the Aſiatic India, and I rather imagine he obtained his name from his travels in Abyſſinia, called by the ancients India; he went as far as Axum, and ſeems to have paid proper attention to the difference of climates, names, and ſituations of places, but he arrived not at the Nile, nor did he attempt it. The province of the Agows was probably at that time inacceſſible, as the court was then in Tigré at Axum, a conſiderable diſtance beyond the Tacazzé, and is to the eaſtward of it.

None of the Portugueſe who firſt arrived in Abyſſinia, neither Covillan, Roderigo de Lima, Chriſtopher de Gama, nor the patriarch Alphonſo Mendes, ever ſaw, or indeed pretended to have ſeen, the ſource of the Nile. At laſt, in the reign of Za Denghel, came Peter Paez, who laid claim to this honour; how far his pretenſions are juſt I am now going to conſider.—Paez has left a hiſtory of the miſſion, and ſome remarkable occurrences that happened in that country, in two thick volumes octavo, cloſely written in a plain ſtile; copies of this work were circulated through every college and ſeminary of Jeſuits that exiſted in his time, and which have been everywhere found in their libraries ſince the diſgrace of that learned body.

Athanasius Kircher, a Jeſuit, well known for his extenſive learning and voluminous writings, and ſtill more for the raſhneſs with which he advances the moſt improbable facts in natural hiſtory, is the man that firſt publiſhed an account of the fountains of the Nile, and, as he ſays, from this journal left by Peter Paez.

I **must**, however, here obſerve, that no relation of this kind was to be found in three copies of Peter Paez's hiſtory, to which I had acceſs when in Italy, on my return home. One of theſe copies I ſaw at Milan, and, by the intereſt of friends, had an opportunity of peruſing it at my leiſure. The other two were at Bologna and Rome. I ran through them rapidly, attending only to the place where the deſcription ought to have been, and where I did not find it; but having copied the firſt and laſt page of the Milan manuſcript, and comparing them with theſe two laſt mentioned, I found that all the three were, word for word, the ſame, and none of them contained one ſyllable of the diſcovery of the ſource.

However this be, I do not think it is right for me to pronounce thus much, unleſs I bring collateral proofs to ſtrengthen my opinion, and to ſhew that no ſuch excurſion was ever pretended to have been made by that miſſionary, in any of his works, unleſs that which paſſed through the hand of Kircher.

Alphonso Mendes came into Abyſſinia about a year after Paez's death. New and deſireable as that diſcovery muſt have been to himſelf, to the pope, king of Spain, and all his great patrons in Portugal and Italy, though he wrote the hiſtory of the country, and of the particulars concerning the miſſion in great detail, and with good judgment, yet he never mentions this journey of Peter Paez, though it probably muſt have been conveyed to Rome and Portugal, after his inſpection, and under his authority.

Balthazar Tellez, a learned Jeſuit, has wrote two volumes in folio with great candour and impartiality, conſidering the ſpirit of thoſe times; and he declares his work to be compiled from this hiſtory of Alphonſo Mendes the patriarch, from the two volumes of Peter Paez, as well as from the regular reports made by the individuals of the company in ſome places, and by the provincial letters in others; to all which he had compleat acceſs, as alſo to the annual reports of Peter Paez among the reſt, from 1598 to 1622; yet Tellez makes no mention of ſuch a diſcovery, though he is very particular as to the merit of each miſſionary during the long reign of Sultan Segued, or Socinios, which occupies more than half of the two volumes.

After theſe ſtrong preſumptions, that Peter Paez neither made ſuch a journey nor ever pretended it, I ſhall ſubmit the account that Paez himſelf, or Kircher for him, has given of the expedition and conſequent diſcovery; and if any of my readers can perſuade themſelves that a man of genius, ſuch as was Peter Paez, tranſported by accident to theſe fountains, and exulting as he does upon the diſcovery, the value of which he ſeems to have known well, could yet have given ſuch a deſcription as he does, I am then contented with being only the partner of Peter Paez.

Before I ſtate the account of his obſervations in his own, or in Kircher's words, I have one obſervation to make regarding the dates and time of the journey. That memorable day which has been fixed upon for the diſcovery, is the 21ſt of April 1618. The rains are then begun, and on that account the ſeaſon being very unwholeſome, armies, without extreme neceſſity, are rarely in the field; between September and February at fartheſt is the time the Abyſſinian army is abroad from the capital, and in action.

There are two nations of Agows in Abyſſinia, the one near the fountains of the Nile, called the Agows of Damot; the other near the head of the Tacazzé, in the province of Laſta, called the Tcheratz Agows. Now, we ſee from the annals of Socinios's reign, that he had ſeveral campaigns againſt the Agows. The firſt was in the fourth year of his reign, in the year 1608; his annals ſay it was againſt the Tcheratz Agow. His ſecond campaign was in the ſeventh year of his reign, or 1611; that, too, was againſt the Agows of Laſta; ſo that if Peter Paez was with the emperor in either of theſe campaigns, he could not have ſeen the head of any river but that of the Tacazzé. The third campaign was in in 1625, againſt Sacala, Geeſh, and Aſhoa, when the Galla made an inroad into Gojam, but retired upon the royal army's marching againſt them, and croſſed the Nile into their own country. Socinios upon this had advanced againſt the Agows of Damot, then in rebellion alſo, and had fought with Sacala, Aſhoa, and Geeſh likewiſe, the clan immediately contiguous to the ſources. Now this was ſurely the time when Peter Paez, or any attendant on the emperor, might have ſeen the fountains of the Nile in ſafety, as the king's army, in whole or in part, muſt have been encamped ed near, or perhaps upon, the very ſources themſelves; a place, of all other, ſuited for ſuch a purpoſe; but this was in the year 1625, and Peter Paez died in the year 1622.

I SHALL now ſtate, in Kircher's own words, tranſlated into Engliſh, the deſcription he has given, as from Paez, of the ſources which he ſaw; and I will fairly ſubmit, to any reader of judgment, whether this is a deſcription he ought to be content with from an eye-witneſs, whether it may not ſuit the ſources of any other river as well as thoſe of the Nile, or whether in itſelf it is diſtinct enough to leave one clear idea behind it.

"THE river*, at this day, by the Ethiopians is called the Abaoy; it riſes in the kingdom of Gojam, in a territory called Sabala, whoſe inhabitants are called Agows. The ſource of the Nile is ſituated in the weſt part of Gojam, in the higheſt part of a valley, which reſembles a great plain on every ſide, ſurrounded by high mountains. On the 21ſt of April, in the year 1618, being here, together with the king and his army, I aſcended the *place*, and obſerved every thing with great attention; I diſcovered firſt two round fountains, each about four palms in diameter, and ſaw, with the greateſt delight, what neither Cyrus † king of the Perſians, nor Cambyſes, nor Alexander the Great, nor the famous Julius Cæſar, could ever diſcover. The two openings of theſe fountains have no iſſue in the plain on the top of the mountain, but flow from the root of it. The ſecond fountain lies

---

[*] In Œdipo Syntagma, I. cap. vii. p. 57.

[†] I never heard that Cyrus had attempted this diſcovery.

about a ſtone-caſt weſt from the firſt: the inhabitants ſay that this whole mountain is full of water, and add, that the whole plain about the fountain is floating and unſteady, a certain mark that there is water concealed under it; for which reaſon, the water does not overflow at the fountain, but forces itſelf with great violence out at the foot of the mountain. The inhabitants, together with the emperor, who was then preſent with his army, maintain that that year it trembled little on account of the drought, but other years, that it trembled and overflowed ſo as that it could ſcarce be approached without danger. The breadth of the circumference may be about the caſt of a ſling: below the top of this mountain the people live about a league diſtant from the fountain to the weſt; and this place is called Geeſh, and the fountain ſeems to be a cannon-ſhot diſtant from Geeſh; moreover, the field where the fountain is, is upon all ſides difficult of acceſs, except on the north ſide, where it may be aſcended with eaſe."

I SHALL make only a few obſervations upon this deſcription, ſufficient to ſhew that it cannot be that of Paez, or any man who had ever been in Abyſſinia: there is no ſuch place known as Sabala; he ſhould have called it Sacala: in the Ethiopic language Sacala means the higheſt ridge of land, where the water falls down equally on both ſides, from eaſt and weſt, or from north and ſouth. So the ſharp roofs of our houſes, or tops of our tents, in that manner are called Sacala, becauſe the water runs down equally on oppoſite ſides; ſo does it in the higheſt lands in every country, and ſo here in Sacala, where the Nile runs to the north, but ſeveral ſtreams, which form the rivers Lac and Temſi, fall down the cliff, or precipice, and proceed ſouthward in the plain of Aſhoa about 300 feet below the level of the ground where the mountain of Geeſh ſtands, at the very foot of which is the marſh wherein are the ſources of the river.

Again, neither Sacala nor Geeſh are on the weſt ſide of Gojam, nor approach to theſe directions; as, firſt the high mountains of Litchambara, then the ſtill higher of Amid Amid, are to be croſſed over, before you reach Gojam from Sacala; and after deſcending from that high barrier of mountains called Amid Amid, you come into the province of Damot, when the whole breadth of that province is ſtill between you and the weſt part of Gojam. Theſe are miſtakes which it is almoſt impoſſible to make, when a man is upon the ſpot, in the midſt of a whole army, every one capable, and ſurely willing (as he was a favourite of the king to give him every ſort of information; nor was there probably any one there who would not have thought himſelf honoured to have been employed to fetch a *ſtraw* for him from the top of Amid Amid.

Both the number and ſituations of the fountains, and the ſituations of the mountain and village of Geeſh with reſpect to them, are therefore abſolutely falſe, as the reader will obſerve in attending to my narrative and the map. This relation of Paez's was in my hand the 5th of November, when I ſurveyed theſe fountains, and all the places adjacent. I meaſured all his diſtances with a gunter's chain in my own hand, and found every one of them to be imaginary; and theſe meaſures ſo taken, as alſo the journal now ſubmitted to the public, were fairly and fully written the ſame day that they were made, before the cloſe of each evening.

It is not eaſy to conceive what ſpecies of information Paez intends to convey to us by the obſervation he makes lower, "That the water, which found way at the foot of the mountain, did not flow at the top of it." It would have been very ſingular if it had; and I fully believe that a mountain voiding the water at its top, when it had free acceſs to run out at its bottom, would have been one of the moſt curious things the two Jeſuits could ever have ſeen in any voyage. But what mountain is it he is ſpeaking of? he has never named any one, but has ſaid the Nile was ſituated in the higheſt part of a plain. I cannot think he means by this that the higheſt part of a plain is a mountain; if he does, it is a ſpecies of deſcription which would need an interpreter. He ſays again, the mountain is full of water, and trembles; and that there is a village below the top of the mountain, on the mountain itſelf. This I never ſaw; they muſt have cold and ſlippery quarters in that mountain, or whatever it is; and if he means the mountain of Geeſh, there is not a village within a quarter a mile of it. The village of Geeſh is in the middle of a high cliff, deſcending into the plain of Aſhoa. The bottom of that cliff or plain is 300 feet, as I have already ſaid, below the baſe of the mountain of Geeſh, and the place where the fountains riſe.

Paez next ſays, that it is three miles from that village of Geeſh to the fountains of the Nile. Now, as my quadrant was placed in my tent, on the brink of the cliff of Geeſh, it was neceſſary for me to meaſure that diſtance; and by allowing for it to reduce my obſervations to the exact ſpot where the ſources roſe, I did accordingly with a chain meaſure from the brink of the precipice to the center of the altar, in which the principal fountain ſtands, and found it 1760 feet or 586 yards 2 feet, and this is the diſtance Paez calls a league, or the largeſt range of a ſhell ſhot from a mortar; this I do aver is an error that is abſolutely impoſſible for any travellers to commit upon the ſpot, or elſe his narrative in general ſhould have very little weight in point of preciſion.

I SHALL cloſe theſe obſervations with one which I think muſt clearly evince Paez had never been upon the ſpot. He ſays the field, in which the fountains of the Nile are, is of very difficult acceſs, the aſcent to it being very ſteep, excepting on the north, where it is plain and eaſy. Now, if we look at the beginning of this deſcription, we ſhould think it would be the deſcent, not the aſcent that would be troubleſome; for the fountains were placed in a valley, and people rather deſcend into valleys than aſcend into them; but ſuppoſing it a valley in which there was a field, upon which there was a mountain, and on the mountain theſe fountains, ſtill I ſay that theſe mountains are nearly inacceſſible on the three ſides, but that the moſt difficult of them all is the north, the way we aſcend from the plain of Goutto. From the eaſt, by Sacala, the aſcent is made from the valley of Litchambara, and from the plain of Aſſoa, to the ſouth, you have the almoſt perpendicular craggy cliff of Geeſh, covered with thorny buſhes, trees, and bamboos, which conceal the mouths of the caverns; and, on the north, you have the mountains of Aformaſha, thick-ſet with all ſorts of thorny ſhrubs and trees, eſpecially with the kantuſſa; theſe thickets are, moreover, full of wild beaſts, eſpecially huge, long-haired baboons, which we frequently met walking upright. Through theſe high and difficult mountains we have only narrow paths, like thoſe of ſheep, made by the goats, or the wild beaſts we are ſpeaking of, which, after we had walked on them for a long ſpace, landed us frequently at the edge of ſome valley, or precipice, and forced us to go back again to ſearch for a new road. From towards Zeegam, to the weſtward, and from the plain where the river winds ſo much, is the only eaſy acceſs to the fountains of the Nile, and they that aſcend to them by this way will not think even that approach too eaſy.

It remains only for me to ſay, that neither have the Jeſuits, (Paez his brethren in the miſſion, and his contemporaries) made any geographical uſe of this diſcovery, either in longitude or latitude; nor have the hiſtorians of his ſociety, who have followed afterwards, with all the information and documents before them, thought proper even to quote his travels; it will not be eaſy, from the authority of a man like Athanaſius Kircher, writing at Rome, to ſupport the reality of ſuch a diſcovery, not to be found in the genuine writings of Peter Paez himſelf. With ſuch a voyage, if it had been real, there ſhould have been publiſhed at leaſt an itinerary, and moſt of the Jeſuits were capable enough to have made a rough obſervation of longitude and latitude, in the country where they reſided, for near one hundred years. Add to this, no obſervation appears from any Jeſuit of the idolatry or pagan worſhip, which prevailed near the ſource of the Nile, and this would ſeem to have been their immediate province.

From Dancaz they might have taken very properly their departure, and, by a compaſs, the uſe of which was then well known to the Portugueſe, they might have kept their route to thoſe fountains without much trouble, and, with a ſufficient degree of exactneſs, to ſhew all the world the road by which they went. They were not fifty miles diſtant from Geeſh when at Gorgora, and they have erred above ſixty, which is ten miles more than the whole diſtance; this happened becauſe they ſought the fountains in Gojam, from which, at Gorgora, they knew themſelves to be at that diſtance, and where the ſource of the Nile never was.

When I ſet out from Gondar, whoſe latitude and longitude I had firſt well aſcertained, I thought in ſuch a purſuit as this, where local diſcovery was the only thing ſought after in all ages, that the beſt way was to ſubſtitute perhaps a drier journal, or itinerary, to a more pleaſant account; with this view I kept the length of my journies each day by a watch, and my direction by the compaſs. I did obſerve, indeed, many altitudes of the ſun and ſtars at Dingleber, at Kelti, and at Goutto; and laſtly, I aſcertained the other extreme, the ſources of the Nile, by a number of obſervations of latitude, and by a very diſtinct and favourable one for the longitude: I calculated none of theſe celeſtial obſervations till I went back to Gondar. I returned by a different way on the other ſide of the Nile, and made one obſervation of the ſun at Welled Abea Abbo, the houſe of Shalaka Welled Amlac, of whom I am about to ſpeak. Arrived at Gondar, I ſummed up my days journies, reduced my bearings and diſtances to a plain courſe, as if I had been at ſea, taking a mean where there was any thing doubtful, and in this topographical draught laid down every village through which

I had paſſed, or which I had ſeen at a ſmall diſtance out of the road, to which I may add every river, an immenſe number of which I had croſſed between Gondar and Geeſh, whither I was going. The reader, upon the inſpection of this ſmall map, will form ſome, but a very inadequate idea of the immenſe labour it coſt me: However, the reſult, when I arrived at Gondar, amply rewarded me for my pains, upon comparing my route by the compaſs, to what it came to be when aſcertained by obſervation; I found my error of computation upon the whole to be ſomething more than 9 miles in latitude, and very nearly 7 in longitude; an error not perceptible in the journey upon any reduced ſcale, and very immaterial to all purpoſes of geography in any large one.

Now Peter Paez, or any man laying claim to a diſcovery ſo long and ſo ardently deſired, ſhould ſurely have done the ſame; eſpecially as from Gorgora he had little more than half of the journal to keep. But if it were true, that he made the diſcovery which Kircher attributes to him, ſtill, for want of this neceſſary attention, he has left the world in the darkneſs he found it; he travelled like a thief, diſcovered that ſecret ſource, and took a peep at it, then covered it again as if he had been affrightened at the ſight of it.

LUDOLF and Voſſius are very merry, without mentioning names, with this ſtory of the diſcovery, which they think Kircher makes for Peter Paez, whom they call the River Finder: they ſay, it is extremely laughable to think, that the emperor of Abyſſinia brought a Jeſuit of Europe to be the antiquary of his country, and to inſtruct him firſt, that the fountains of the Nile were in his dominions, and in what part of them. But, with Voſſius's leave, this is a ſpecies of intemperate ill-founded criticiſm; neither Kircher, nor Paez, nor whoever was author of that work, ever ſaid they inſtructed the emperor about the place in his dominions where the Nile aroſe, as what he ſays is only that the Agows of Geeſh reported that the mountain trembled in dry weather, and had done ſo that year, when the emperor, who was preſent, confirmed the Agow's report: this is not ſaying that Peter Paez told the emperor encamped with his army upon the fountains, that the Nile roſe in his dominions, and that this was the ſource. Wo be to the works of Scaliger, Bochart, or Voſſius, when they ſhall, in their turn, be ſubmitted to ſuch criticiſm as this.

A PROTESTANT miſſion was the next, that I know of at leaſt, which ſucceeded that of the Portugueſe, and conſiſted only of one traveller, Peter Heyling, of Lubec; although he lived in the country, nay, governed it ſeveral years, he never attempted to viſit the ſource of that river; he had dedicated himſelf to a ſtudious and ſolitary life, having, among other parts of his reading, a very competent knowledge of Roman, or civil law; he is ſaid to have given a great deal of his time to the compiling an inſtitute of that law in the Abyſſinian language for the uſe of that nation, upon a plan he had brought from Germany; but he did not live to finiſh it, though that and two other books, written in Geez, ſtill exiſt in private hands in Abyſſinia, at leaſt I have been often confidently told ſo.

THE next and laſt attempt I ſhall take notice of, and one of the moſt extraordinary that ever was made for the diſcovery of the Nile, was that of a German nobleman, Peter

Joſeph le Roux, comte de Deſneval. This gentleman had been in the Daniſh navy ever ſince the year 1721, and in 1739 was raiſed to the rank of rear-admiral in that ſervice. He ſays, in a publication of his own now lying before me, that the ambaſſador of Louis XIV. (M. du Roule) and all thoſe ſent by the Dutch and Engliſh to viſit that country, had periſhed, becauſe they were ignorant of the proper *key* to be employed to enter that country, which he flattered himſelf he had found in Denmark.

In 1739 he reſigned his Daniſh commiſſion, and began his firſt attempt in Egypt, whilſt, for the greater facility of travelling in theſe *mild* and *hoſpitable* countries, he took his wife along with him. The count and the counteſs went as far as Cairo, where they wiſely began at a feſtival to diſpute upon the etiquette with a Turkiſh mob, and this bringing the janizaries and guards of police upon them to take them into cuſtody, the *grey mare*, as they ſay, proved the better *horſe;* Madame la comteſſe de Deſneval exerted herſelf ſo much, that ſhe defeated the body of janizaries, wounding ſeveral of them, armed only with a very feminine weapon, a pair of ſciſſars, which, with full as much profit, and much more decency, ſhe might have been uſing, ſurrounded with her family at home.

However well acquainted the count was with the key for entering into Abyſſinia, he had not apparently got the door. In fact, his firſt ſcheme was a moſt ridiculous one; he reſolved to aſcend the Nile in a barge armed with ſmall cannon, and all neceſſary proviſions for himſelf and wife. Some people wiſer than himſelf, whom he met at Cairo, ſuggeſted to him, that, ſuppoſing government might protect him ſo far as to allow his barge ſafely to paſs the confines of Egypt and to the firſt cataract, where the malice of the pilots would certainly have deſtroyed her, and ſuppoſing ſhe was arrived at Ibrim or Deir, the laſt garriſons depending on Cairo, and that this might have been atchieved by money, (for by money any thing may be obtained from the government of Cairo,) yet ſtill, ſome days journey above the garriſons of Deir and Ibrim, begin the barren and dreadful deſerts of Nubia; and farther ſouth, at the great cataract of Jan Adel, the Nile falls twenty feet down a perpendicular rock; ſo here certainly was to be the end of his voyage; but the count, being ignorant of the manners of thoſe countries, and exceedingly preſumptuous of his own powers, flattered himſelf to obtain ſuch aſſiſtance from the garriſon of Ibrim and Deir, that he could unſcrew his veſſel, take her to pieces, and carry her, by force of men, round behind the cataract, where he was to reſcrew and launch her again into the Nile.

THE Kennouſs, inhabiting near the cataract, have ſeveral villages, particularly two, one called Succoot, or the place of tents, where Kalid Ibn el Waalid, after taking Syene in the Khalifat of Omar, encamped his army in his march to Dongola; the other, in a plain near the river, called Aſel Dimmo, or the Field of Blood, where the ſame Kalid defeated an army of Nubians, who were marching to the relief of Dongola, which was by him immediately after beſieged and taken. Theſe two villages are on the Egyptian ſide of the cataract; the direct occupation of the inhabitants is gathering ſena, where it very much abounds, and they carry it in boats down to Cairo. Above, and on the other ſide of the cataract, is another large village of the Kennouſs,

nouſs, called Takaki. Some of theſe miſerable wretches, were brought to the count, and a treaty made, that all theſe men of the two villages were to aſſiſt him in his re-embarkation, after he had got his barge round the cataract; and among theſe barbarians he would have loſt his life.

The count, beſides his wife, had brought with him his lieutenant, Mr Norden, a Dane, who was to ſerve him as draughtſman; but neither the count, counteſs, nor lieutenant underſtood one word of the languages. There are always (happily for travellers) wiſe and honeſt men among the French and Venetian merchants at Cairo, who, ſeeing the obſtinacy of the count, perſuaded him that it was more military, and more in the ſtile of an admiral, to detach Norden, his inferior officer, to reconnoitre Ibrim, Deir, and the cataract of Jan Adel, as alſo to renew his treaty with the Kennouſs at Succoot and Aſel Dimmo.

Norden accordingly ſailed in the common embarkations uſed upon the Nile; the voyage is in every body's hands. It has certainly a conſiderable deal of merit, but is full of ſquabbles and fightings with boat-men and porters, which might as well have been left out, as they lead to no inſtruction, but ſerve only to diſcourage travellers, for they were chiefly owing to ignorance of language. It was with the utmoſt difficulty, and after many diſaſters, that Norden arrived at Syenè, and the firſt cataract; after which greater and greater were encountered before he reached Ibrim, where the Kaſcheff put him in priſon, robbed him of what he had in the boat, and ſcarcely ſuffered him to return to Cairo without cutting his throat, which, for a conſiderable time, he and his ſoldiers had determined to do.

This ſample of the difficulties, or rather impoſſibility of the voyage into Abyſſinia by Nubia, diſcouraged the count; and much reaſon had he to be thankful that his attempt had not ended among the Kennouſs at Succoot. He therefore changed his plan, and reſolved to enter Abyſſinia by a voyage round the Cape into the Indian Ocean, through the Straits of Babelmandeb into the Red Sea, and ſo to Maſuah. In this voyage he began to make uſe of his Spaniſh commiſſion, and, having taken two Engliſh ſhips, under protection of a neutral fort in the Iſle of May, he was met there ſome days after by commodore Barnet, who made all his ſhips prizes, and ſent the count home paſſenger in a Portugueſe ſhip to Liſbon.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Deſcription of the Sources of the Nile—Of Geeſh—Accounts of its ſeveral Cataracts—Courſe from its Riſe to the Mediterranean.

I HOPE that what I have now ſaid will be thought ſufficient to convince all impartial readers, that theſe celebrated ſources have, as it were, by a fatality, remained to our days as unknown as they were to antiquity, no good or genuine voucher having yet been produced capable of proving that they were before diſcovered, or ſeen by the curious eye of any traveller, from earlieſt ages to this day; and it is with confidence I propoſe to my reader, that he will conſider me as ſtill ſtanding at theſe fountains, and patiently hear from me the recital of the origin, courſe, names, and circumſtances of this the moſt famous river in the world, which he will in vain ſeek from books, or from any other human authority whatever, and which, by the care and attention I have paid to the ſubject, will, I hope, be found ſatisfactory here;—

——————Non fabula mendax
Auſa loqui de fonte tuo eſt: ubicunque videris,
Quæreris; et nulli contingit gloria genti,
Ut Nilo ſit læta ſuo, tua flumina prodam,
Quâ Deus undarum celator, Nile, tuarum
Te mihi nôſſe dedit.——————

LUCAN.

THE Agows of Damot pay divine honour to the Nile; they worſhip the river, and thouſands of cattle have been offered, and ſtill are offered, to the ſpirit ſuppoſed to reſide at its ſource. They are divided into clans, or tribes; and it is worthy of obſervation, that it is ſaid there never was a feud, or hereditary animoſity between any two of theſe clans; or, if the ſeeds of any ſuch were ſown, they did not vegetate longer than till the next general convocation of all the tribes, who meet annually at the ſource of the river, to which they ſacrifice, calling it by the name of the *God of Peace*. One of the leaſt conſiderable of theſe clans, for power and number, has ſtill the preference among its brethren, from the circumſtance that, in its territory, and near the miſerable village that gives it name, are ſituated the much ſought-for ſprings from which the Nile riſes.

GEESH, however, though not farther diſtant from theſe than 600 yards, is not in ſight of the ſources of the Nile. The country, upon the ſame plane with the fountains, terminates in a cliff about 300 yards deep down to the plain of Aſſoa, which flat country continues in the ſame ſubaltern degree of elevation, till it meets the Nile again about ſeventy miles ſouthward, after it has made the circuit of the provinces of Gojam and Damot. This cliff ſeems purpoſely

faſhioned

faſhioned into many ſhelves or ſtages, each of which is occupied by a cluſter of houſes ſeldom above eight or ten in number; ſome above, ſome below, ſome along the ſide of each other, but chiefly occupying the ſpace, or two-thirds of the middle of the cliff, that is, none of them nearer to the top of the cliff, nor to the plain of Aſſoa below, than a diſtance equal to that proportion of the whole. The reaſon of chooſing this ſituation is the fear of the Galla, who have often invaded that part of Abyſſinia, and have even exterminated ſome clans of Agows entirely.

In the middle of this cliff, in a direction ſtraight north towards the fountains, is a prodigious cave, whether the work of nature or of art, I cannot determine; in it are many bye-paths, ſo that it is very difficult for a ſtranger to extricate himſelf; it is a natural labyrinth, large enough to contain the inhabitants of the village, and their cattle; there are likewiſe two or three leſſer ones, which I did not ſee; in this large one, I tired myſelf part of ſeveral days, endeavouring to reach as far northward as poſſible, but the air, when I had advanced ſomething above one hundred yards, ſeemed to threaten to extinguiſh my candle by its dampneſs; and the people were beſides not at all diſpoſed to gratify my curioſity farther, after aſſuring me that there was nothing at the end more remarkable than I then ſaw, which I have reaſon to believe was the caſe.

The face of this cliff, which fronts to the ſouth, has a moſt pictureſque appearance from the plain of Aſſoa below, parts of the houſes at every ſtage appearing, through the thickets of trees and buſhes with which the whole face of the cliff is thickly covered; impenetrable fences of the very worſt kind of thorn, hide the mouths of the caverns above mentioned, even from ſight; there is no other communication with the houſes either from above or below, but by narrow-winding ſheep-paths, which through theſe thorns are very difficult to be diſcerned, for all are allowed to be overgrown with the utmoſt wildneſs, as a part of their defence; lofty and large trees (moſt of them of the thorny kind) tower high up above the edge of the cliff, and ſeem to be a fence againſt people falling down into the plain; theſe are all at their proper ſeaſon covered with flowers of different ſorts and colours, ſo are the buſhes below on the face of the cliff: every thorn in Abyſſinia indeed bears a beautiful flower; a ſmall atonement for the evils they occaſion.

From the edge of the cliff of Geeſh above where the village is ſituated, the ground ſlopes with a very eaſy deſcent due north, and lands you at the edge of a triangular marſh above eighty ſix-yards broad, in the line of the fountains, and two hundred and eighty-ſix yards two feet from the edge of the cliff above the houſe of the prieſt of the river, where I reſided: this triangle, ſuppoſing it a right one, will meaſure one hundred and ninety-ſix yards in its length, or in the perpendicular; I mean it did ſo on the 6th of November 1770; doubtleſs, like other marſhes, in the middle of the dry ſeaſon, and of the rains, it will vary its dimenſions. I ſuppoſe that this perpendicular repreſents the north of the marſh, and immediately from the brink of it the ground riſes in a rather ſteep bank, and forms a round hill not a hundred yards high, upon the top of which is placed the church of St Michael Geeſh; I did not meaſure this diſtance, but am ſure it is very little leſs than five hundred yards from the church to the middle fountain. On the eaſt the ground deſcends likewiſe with a very eaſy tho' perceptible ſlope from the large village of Sacala, which gives its name to that territory; it is diſtant ſix miles from the ſource, but, to ſight, ſeems ſcarcely to be two.

I SHALL ſuppoſe the ſharp point of the triangle compoſed of the hypothenuſe and the perpendicular, to point like the needle of a compaſs to Sacala, and the line of the hypothenuſe to repreſent the ſouth ſide of the marſh near the village Geeſh. The baſe, or line, uniting the weſt end of the hypothenuſe, and forming the right angle with the other ſide, I ſuppoſe to be the edge of the marſh formed by the bottom of the mountain of Geeſh, and from this weſt ſide of it riſes this high and beautiful mountain, quite detached from others, like a pyramid, which it reſembles in its elegant and regular form. It is about 4870 feet high meaſured in the ſlope; for near one half way the aſcent is very eaſy and gradual. The baſe being of a remarkable breadth, it then becomes exceedingly ſteep, but all the way covered with good earth, producing fine graſs and clover, interſperſed with wild flowers.

UPON the rock in the middle of this plain, the Agows uſed to pile up the bones of the beaſts killed in ſacrifice, mixing them with billets of wood, after which they ſet them on fire. This is now diſcontinued, or rather transferred to another place near the church, as they are at preſent indulged in the full enjoyment of their idolatrous rites, both under Faſil and Michael.

IN the middle of this marſh (that is about forty yards from each ſide of it) and ſomething leſs from the bottom of the mountain of Geeſh, ariſes a hillock of a circular form, about three feet from the ſurface of the marſh itſelf, though apparently founded much deeper in it. The diameter of this is ſomething ſhort of twelve feet, it is ſurrounded by a ſhallow trench, which collects the water and voids it eaſtward; it is firmly built with ſod or earthen turf, brought from the ſides, and conſtantly kept in repair, and this is the altar upon which all their religious ceremonies are performed. In the middle of this altar is a hole, obviouſly made, or at leaſt enlarged by the hand of man. It is kept clear of graſs, or other aquatic plants, and the water in it is perfectly pure and limpid, but has no ebullition or motion of any kind diſcernible upon its ſurface. This mouth, or opening of the ſource, is ſome parts of an inch leſs than three feet diameter, and the water ſtood at that time the 5th of November, about two inches from the lip or brim, nor did it either increaſe or diminiſh during all the time of my ſtay at Geeſh though we made plentiful uſe of it.

Upon putting down the ſhaft of my lance at ſix feet four inches, I found a very feeble reſiſtance, as if from weak ruſhes or graſs, and about ſix inches deeper I found my lance had entered into ſoft earth, but met with no ſtones or gravel; this was confirmed by another experiment, made on the 9th with a heavy plummet and line beſmeared with ſoap, the bottom of which brought up at the above depth only black earth, ſuch as the marſh itſelf and its ſides are compoſed of.

Ten feet diſtant from the firſt of theſe ſprings, a little to the weſt of ſouth, is the ſecond fountain, about eleven inches in diameter, but this is eight feet, three inches deep.

And about twenty feet diſtant from the firſt, to the S. S. W. is the third ſource, its mouth being ſomething more than two feet large, and it is five feet eight inches deep. Both theſe laſt fountains ſtand in the middle of ſmall altars, made, like the former, of firm ſod, but neither of them above three feet diameter, and having a foot of leſs elevation than the firſt. The altar in this third ſource ſeemed almoſt diſſolved by the water, which in both ſtood nearly up to the brim; at the foot of each appeared a clear and briſk running rill; theſe uniting joined the water in the trench of the firſt altar, and then proceeded directly out, I ſuppoſe, at the point of the triangle, pointing eaſtward, in a quantity that would have filled a pipe of about two inches diameter.

The water from theſe fountains is very light and good, and perfectly taſteleſs; it was at this time moſt intenſely cold, though expoſed to the mid-day ſun without ſhelter, there being no trees nor buſhes nearer it than the cliff of Geeſh on its ſouth ſide, and the trees that ſurround Saint Michael Geeſh on the north, which, according to the cuſtom of Abyſſinia, is, like other churches, planted in the midſt of a grove.

On Monday the 5th of November, the day after my arrival at Geeſh, the weather perfectly clear, cloudleſs, and nearly calm, in all reſpects well adapted to obſervation, being extremely anxious to aſcertain, beyond the power of controverſy, the preciſe ſpot on the globe that this fountain had ſo long occupied unknown, I pitched my tent on the north edge of the cliff, immediately above the prieſt's houſe, having verified the inſtrument with all the care poſſible, both at the zenith and horizon. With a braſs quadrant of three feet radius, by one meridian altitude of the ſun's upper limb, all neceſſary æquations and deductions conſidered, I determined the latitude of the place of obſervation to be 10° 59′ 11″; and by another obſervation of the ſame kind made on the 6th, 10° 59′ 8″; after which, by a medium of thirty-three obſervations of ſtars, the largeſt and neareſt, the firſt vertical, I found the latitude to be 10° 59′ 10″; a mean of which being 10° 59′ 9½″, ſay 10° 59′ 10″; and if we ſhould be ſo unneceſſarily ſcrupulous as to add 15″ for the meaſured diſtance the place of the tent was ſouth of the altar, then we ſhall have 10° 59′ 25″ in round numbers, for the exact latitude of the principal fountain of the Nile, though the Jeſuits have ſuppoſed it, 12° N. by a random gueſs; but this being nearly the latitude of Gondar, the capital from which they ſet out, ſhews plainly they knew not the preciſe latitude of either of theſe places.

On the 7th of November I was fortunate enough to be in time for the obſervation of an immerſion of the firſt ſatellite of Jupiter, the laſt viſible here before that planet's conjunction with the ſun. My ſituation was very unfavourable, my view of the heavens being every way interrupted by a thick grove of bamboo canes, with high and ſhady trees growing upon the head of the precipice. Jupiter was low, and the prodigious maſs of that beautiful mountain of Geeſh, bade fair to hide him before our buſineſs was done; I was therefore obliged to remove my teleſcope up to the edge of the cliff, after which, the weather being perfectly favourable, I had as fair and diſtinct a view of the planet as I could deſire, and from that obſervation I did conclude unalterably the longitude of the chief fountain of the Nile to be 36° 55′ 30″ eaſt of the meridian of Greenwich.

The night of the 4th, that very night of my arrival, melancholy reflections upon my preſent ſtate, the doubtfulneſs of my return in ſafety, were I permitted to make the attempt, and the fears that even this would be refuſed, according to the rule obſerved in Abyſſinia with all travellers who have once entered the kingdom; the conſciouſneſs of the pain that I was then occaſioning to many worthy individuals, expecting daily that information concerning my ſituation which it was not in my power to give them; ſome other thoughts, perhaps, ſtill nearer the heart than thoſe, crowded upon my mind, and forbade all approach of ſleep.

I was, at that very moment, in poſſeſſion of what had, for many years, been the principal object of my ambition and wiſhes: indifference, which from the uſual infirmity of human nature follows, at leaſt for a time, complete enjoyment, had taken place of it. The marſh, and the fountains, upon compariſon with the riſe of many of our rivers, became now a trifling object in my ſight. I remembered that magnificent ſcene in my own native country, where the Tweed, Clyde, and Annan riſe in one hill; three rivers, as I now thought, not inferior to the Nile in beauty, preferable to it in the cultivation of thoſe countries through which they flow; ſuperior, vaſtly ſuperior to it in the virtues and qualities of the inhabitants, and in the beauty of its flocks; crowding its paſtures in peace, without fear of violence from man or beaſt. I had ſeen the riſe of the Rhine and Rhone, and the more magnificent ſources of the Soane; I began, in my ſorrow, to treat the inquiry about the ſource of the Nile as a violent effort of a diſtempered fancy:—

> What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
> That he ſhould weep for her?—

Grief or deſpondency now rolling upon me like a torrent; relaxed, not refreſhed, by unquiet and imperfect ſleep, I ſtarted from my bed in the utmoſt agony; I went to the door of my tent; every thing was ſtill; the Nile, at whoſe head I ſtood, was not capable either to promote or to interrupt my ſlumbers, but the coolneſs and ſerenity of the night braced my nerves, and chaſed away thoſe phantoms that, while in bed, had oppreſſed and tormented me.

It was true, that numerous dangers, hardſhips, and ſorrows had beſet me through this half of my excurſion; but it was ſtill as true, that another Guide, more powerful than my own courage, health, or underſtanding, if any of theſe can be called man's own, had uniformly protected me in all that tedious half; I found my confidence not abated, that ſtill the ſame Guide was able to conduct me to my now wiſhed-for home: I immediately reſumed my former fortitude, conſidered the Nile indeed as no more than riſing from ſprings, as all other rivers do, but widely different in this, that it was the palm for three thouſand years held out to all the nations in the world as a *detur digniſſimo*, which, in my cool hours, I had thought was worth the attempting at the riſk of my life, which I had long either reſolved to loſe, or lay this diſcovery, a trophy in which I could have no competitor, for the honour of my country, at the feet of my ſovereign, whoſe ſervant I was.

I HAD procured from the Engliſh ſhips, while at Jidda, ſome quick-ſilver, perfectly pure, and heavier than the common ſort; warming therefore the tube gently at the fire, I filled it with this quick-ſilver, and, to my great ſurpriſe, found that it ſtood at the height of 22 Engliſh inches: ſuſpecting that ſome air might have inſinuated itſelf into the tube, I laid it by in a warm part of the tent, covered till morning, and returning to bed, ſlept there profoundly till ſix, when, ſatisfied the whole was in perfect order, I found it to ſtand at 22 Engliſh inches; neither did it vary ſenſibly from that height any of the following days I ſtaid at Geeſh; and thence I inferred, that, at the ſources of the Nile, I was then more than two miles above the level of the ſea; a prodigious height, to enjoy a ſky perpetually clear, as alſo a hot ſun never over-caſt for a moment with clouds from riſing to ſetting.

ON the 6th of November, at a quarter paſt five in the morning, Fahrenheit's thermometer ſtood at 44°, at noon 96°, and at ſun-ſet 46°. It was, as to ſenſe, cold at night, and ſtill more ſo an hour before ſun-riſe.

THE Nile, keeping nearly in the middle of the marſh, runs eaſt for thirty yards, with a very little increaſe of ſtream, but perfectly viſible, till met by the graſſy brink of the land declining from Sacala. This turns it round gradually to the N. E. and then due north; and, in the two miles it flows in that direction, the river receives many ſmall contributions from ſprings that riſe in the banks on each ſide of it: there are two, particularly one on the hill at the back of St Michael Geeſh, the other a little lower than it on the other ſide, on the ground declining from Sacala. Theſe laſt-mentioned ſprings are more than double its quantity; and being arrived under the hill whereon ſtands the church of Saint Michael Sacala, about two miles from its ſource, it there becomes a ſtream that would turn a common mill, ſhallow, clear, and running over a rocky bottom about three yards wide: this muſt be underſtood to be variable according to the ſeaſon; and the preſent obſervations are applicable to the 5th of November, when the rains had ceaſed for ſeveral weeks. There is the ford which we paſſed going to Geeſh, and we croſſed it the day of our arrival, in the time of my converſation with Woldo about the ſaſh.

Nothing can be more beautiful than this ſpot; the ſmall riſing hills about us were all thick-covered with verdure, eſpecially with clover, the largeſt and fineſt I ever ſaw; the tops of the heights crowned with trees of a prodigious ſize; the ſtream, at the banks of which we were ſitting, was limpid and pure as the fineſt cryſtal; the ford, covered thick with a buſhy kind of tree that ſeemed to affect to grow to no height, but thick with foliage and young branches, rather to court the ſurface of the water, whilſt it bore, in prodigious quantities, a beautiful yellow flower, not unlike a ſingle wild roſe of that colour, but without thorns; and, indeed, upon examination, we found that it was not a ſpecies of the roſe, but of hypericum.

From the ſource to this beautiful ford, below the church of St Michael Geeſh, I enjoyed my ſecond victory over this coy river, after the firſt obtained at the fountains themſelves. What might ſtill be ſaid of the world in general no longer applied to me:—

——————Nec contigit ulli
Hoc vidiſſe caput;

And again,

Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre.

Here, at the ford, after having ſtepped over it fifty times, I obſerved it no larger than a common mill ſtream. The Nile, from this ford, turns to the weſtward, and, after running over looſe ſtones occaſionally, in that direction, about four miles farther, the angle of inclination increaſing greatly, broken water, and a fall commences of about ſix feet, and thus it gets rid of the mountainous place of its nativity, and iſſues into the plain of Goutto, where is its firſt cataract; for, as I have ſaid before, I don't account the broken water, or little falls, cataracts, which are not at all viſible in the height of the rains.

Arrived in the plain of Goutto, the river ſeems to have loſt all its violence, and ſcarcely is ſeen to flow, but, at the ſame time, it there makes ſo many ſharp, unnatural windings, that it differs from any other river I ever ſaw, making above twenty ſharp angular peninſulas in the courſe of five miles, through a bare, marſhy plain of clay, quite deſtitute of trees, and exceedingly inconvenient and unpleaſant to travel. After paſſing this plain, it turns due north, receives the tribute of many ſmall ſtreams, the Gometti, the Googueri, and the Kebezza, which deſcend from the mountains of Aformaſha; and, united, fall into the Nile about twenty miles below its ſource; it begins here to run rapidly, and again receives a number of beautiful rivulets, which have their riſe in the heights of Litchambara, the ſemi-circular range of mountains that paſs behind, and ſeem to incloſe

Aformaſha: Theſe are the Caccino, the Carnachiuli, the Googueri, the Iworra, the Jeddeli, and the Minch, all which, running into the Davola, join the Nile ſomething leſs than a mile weſt of the church of Abbo.

It is now become a conſiderable ſtream; its banks high and broken, covered with old timber trees for the ſpace of about three miles; it inclines to the north-eaſt, and winds exceedingly, and is then joined by the ſmall river Diwa from the eaſt. It then makes a ſemi-circle, and receives Dee-ohha, turns ſharply to the eaſt, and falls down its ſecond cataract at Kerr. About three miles below this cataract, the large, pleaſant, and limpid Jemma pays its tribute to the Nile. Though its courſe is now moſtly north, through Maitſha on the eaſt, and Arooſſi and Sankraber on the weſt, it ſtill is inclining toward the lake Tzana, and, after receiving the rivers Boha and Amlac Ohha, ſmall ſtreams from the weſt, and the Aſſar, Arooſſi, and Kelti, large rivers from the eaſt, it croſſes the ſouth end of the lake Tzana for about ſeven leagues, preſerving the colour of its ſtream diſtinct from that of the lake, till it iſſues out at the weſt ſide of it in the territory of Dara, where there is a ford, though very deep and dangerous, immediately where it firſt reſumes the appearance of a river.

The deep ſtream is here exceedingly rapid; the banks in the courſe of a few miles become very high, and are covered with a verdure, abundant and varied beyond all deſcription: paſſing afterwards below Dara, it bounds that narrow ſtripe of flat country which is called Foggora, confined between the lake and the mountains of Begemder, till it arrives at its third cataract of Alata, a ſmall village of Mahometans, on the eaſt ſide of the river, and there exhibits a ſcene that requires more fancy, and the deſcription of a more poetical pen than mine, although the impreſſion the ſight of it made upon me will certainly never be removed but with life.

The courſe of the river is now S. E.; in that direction it waſhes the weſtern part of Begemder and Amhara on the right; the river then incloſes the province of Gojam, ſo that, in the circle that it makes in returning towards its ſource, that province remains always on the right.

From both ſides, the Nile receives a number of tributary ſtreams, the Muga, Gammala, Abea, Aſwari, and Maſhillo, from the mountains of Gojam; and the Baſhilo, Boha, and Geeſhem from thoſe of Begemder and Amhara; it then paſſes below Walaka. The river now has a courſe near the ſouthward, paſſes Upper and Lower Shoa. From theſe countries, on the eaſt of the Nile, come the great rivers Samba, Jemma, Roma, with ſome others, and the Temſi, Gult, and Tzul from the high country of the Agows, and Amid Amid to the northward. From Shoa the Nile winds to the S. W. to the W. N. W. nearly incloſing all the ſouth of Gojam. Immediately adjoining to it, turning ſtill more northerly, is the province of Bizamo, bordering on the river Yabous, which, coming from the ſouthward, and terminating this province, falls into the Nile.

The Nile, now turned almoſt due north, approaches its ſource ſo as to be diſtant from it only about 62 miles; it is here very deep and rapid, and is only fordable at certain ſeaſons of the year. The Galla, however, when they invade Abyſſinia, croſs it at all times without difficulty, either by ſwimming, or on goats ſkins blown up like bladders:

other means of paſſing are in ſmall rafts, placed upon two ſkins filled with wind; or, twiſting their hands round the horſe's tail, they are drawn over by them; this laſt is the way that the women, who follow the armies of Abyſſinia, croſs unfordable rivers, a caſe that always occurs in late campaigns. Crocodiles abound exceedingly in this part of the Nile; but the people, who live on the banks of the river, have or pretend to have charms which defend them from the moſt voracious of theſe animals.

Adjoining to the Gongas, and bounding them on the north, ariſes a vaſt chain of very high mountains; the ſouth ſide of this is inhabited by tribes of Gongas and others, but on the north-eaſt ſide, neareſt Abyſſinia, is a nation of perfect blacks, called Guba. The Nile ſeems to have forced its way through a gap in this prodigious barrier, and falls down a cataract of about 280 feet. This is immediately followed by two others in the ſame ridge of mountains, both very conſiderable, if not compared with the firſt. This high ridge runs weſt far into the continent of Africa, where it is called Dyre and Tegla; the eaſt end (that is eaſt of the Nile) joins the mountainous country of Kuara, and is there called the Mountains of Fazuclo. Theſe mountains, as far as I could learn, are all very fully inhabited throughout by many powerful clans, or nations, moſtly Pagans. It is, however, a country the leaſt known of any in Africa, but a very large quantity of gold is brought from thence, as well as many ſlaves; the gold is waſhed down by the torrents in the time of the tropical rains, and, upon theſe ceaſing, they ſearch after that metal found in ſmall pellets entangled among roots, branches, tufts of graſs, hollows, or in any thing that can impriſon and detain it. This is the fine gold of Sennaar, called Tibbar.

The Nile now runs cloſe by Sennaar, in a direction nearly north and ſouth; it then turns ſharply toward the eaſt, is brim-full and vaſtly pleaſant in the fair ſeaſon, being indeed the only ornament of this bare and flat, though cultivated country. From Sennaar it paſſes many large towns inhabited by Arabs, all of them white people. The Nile then paſſes Gerri, and runs N. E. to join the Tacazzè, paſſing in its way a large and populous town called Chendi, probably the ancient metropolis of *Candace* *.

If we are not to reject entirely the authority of ancient hiſtory, the iſland of Meroë, ſo famous in the firſt ages, muſt be found ſomewhere between the ſource of the Nile and this point, where the two rivers unite; for of the Nile we are certain, and it ſeems very clear that the Atbara is the Aſtaboras of the ancients. Pliny † ſays, it is the ſtream which incloſes the left ſide of Meroë as the Nile does the right; and we muſt conſider him to be looking ſouthward from Alexandria, when he uſes the otherwiſe equivocal terms of right and left, and, after this junction of theſe two rivers, the Nile receives or unites itſelf with no other till it falls into the ſea at Alexandria.

Much inquiry has been made about this iſland, once a moſt diſtinguiſhed ſpot on our globe, the cradle of ſcience and philoſophy, which ſpread itſelf from this to enlighten other nations, we are now full of uncertainty, ſearching in a deſert for the place of its exiſtence; ſuch is the miſerable inſtability of all human excellence. Nothing but confuſion has followed this inquiry, becauſe they who were engaged in it rather ſubſtituted vain ſyſtematical prejudices of their own, than ſet themſelves to conſider thoſe lights which were immediately before them.

---

* Called in the Ethiopic annals *Hendaqué;* wrote originally, I ſuppoſe, with an *X* or *Ch*.

† Lib. v. cap. 9. Nat. Hiſt.

THE Jeſuits, and a French writer, who is a conſtant champion of their errors, have fixed the peninſula of Gojam to be the Meroë of the ancients. M. le Grande (the compiler alluded to) having in vain endeavoured to anſwer the objections againſt Gojam being Meroë, at laſt declares, in a kind of literary paſſion, that the ancients have ſpoken ſo differently about Meroë, that Gojam is as likely to be the place as any other.

I HAVE a proper eſteem for the merit of M. le Grande, where he forms his conjectures from his own opinion, and I have alſo a due deference to that learned Order the Jeſuits; it is to their labours, that learning in general, and geography in particular, has been more indebted than to thoſe of any other ſet of men whatever. Yet ſtill I can never believe, either that Gojam is Meroë, or that there is any difficulty in finding its true ſituation, or that the ancients have written confuſedly about it. On the contrary, I find it deſcribed by its latitude, its diſtance from places known, the produce of its ſoil, colour of its inhabitants, and ſeveral other circumſtances which peculiarly belong to it, with greater accuracy and preciſion than many other diſputed ſituations.

I SHALL begin by giving my reaſons why Gojam is not Meroë: and, firſt, Diodorus [*] tells us, this iſland had its name from a ſiſter of Cambyſes, king of Perſia, who died there in the expedition that prince had undertaken againſt Ethiopia. Now, Cambyſes's army periſhed in the deſert immediately to the ſouthward, after he had paſſed Meroë, conſequently he never was in Gojam, nor within 200 miles of it; his mother, therefore, could not have died there, nor would his army have periſhed with hunger if he had arrived in Gojam, or near it, for he would then have been in one of the moſt plentiful countries in the world.

THE next reaſon to prove that Gojam is not Meroë, is, that that iſland was incloſed between the Aſtaboras and the Nile, but Gojam is ſurrounded entirely by the Nile; there is no other river than it that can, or ever did, paſs for the Aſtaboras, whoſe ſituation was diſtant, and which, retaining its ancient name, cannot be miſtaken, for it is at this day called Atbara. Again, as the ancients knew Meroë, if Gojam had been Meroë, they muſt have known the fountains of the Nile; and this we are ſure they did not.

ON the other hand, Pliny ſays, Meroë, the moſt conſiderable of all the iſlands of the Nile, is called Aſtaboras, from the name of its left channel—"*Circa clariſſimam earum Meroën,* "*Aſtabores lævo alveo dictus;* [†]" which cannot deſcribe any other place than the confluence of thoſe two rivers, the Nile and Atbara. The ſame author ſays farther, that the ſun is vertical twice a-year, once when proceeding northward he enters into the 18th degree, Taurus, and after returning ſouthward into the 14th degree of the Lion.——Lucan ſays the ſame:—

---

[*] Diod. Sicul. Bibliothec. lib. i. p. 20.

[†] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. v. cap. 9.

> ———*Latè tibi gurgite rupto*
> *Ambitur nigris Meroë fæcunda colonis,*
> *Læta comis hebeni; quæ quamvis arbore multâ*
> *Frondeat, æſtatem nullâ ſibi mitigat umbrâ:*
> *Linea tam rectum mundi ferit illa Leonem.*

Now Gojam, being in lat. 10°, could never anſwer this deſcription.

But there are in theſe lines two circumſtances which are peculiar to the peninſula of Atbara, or Meroë, and deſcribed as ſuch by the poet. The firſt is, the inhabitants of Meroë were black, ſuch were the Gymnoſophiſts, the firſt philoſophers and inhabitants of this iſland, and ſuch they have ever been down to the Saracen conqueſt. On the other hand, nobody will pretend to ſay that the people of Gojam are black; they are long-haired, and of as fair a complexion as other Abyſſinians; nor was it ever ſuppoſed that they had philoſophers or ſcience among them before the Jeſuits arrived in the country.

The next circumſtance, peculiar to Meroë, is, that the ebony-tree grew there, which is ſpread all over the peninſula of Atbara, and out of it this tree is not found, (as far as I know) unleſs a few trees in the province of Kuara, in the low and northermoſt part of it; a country, for its intolerable heat, not inferior to that of Atbara, and contiguous to it; but in

Gojam, a country deluged with ſix months rain, this tree would not grow; though ſo much farther ſouth it is near two Engliſh miles higher than Atbara, and is therefore too cold. Such are my reaſons for believing that Gojam cannot be Meroë. In my return through the deſert I ſhall confirm this, by proving that Atbara is Meroë, and that we are to look for it about lat. 16° 29′, near the end of the tropical rains.

The Nile, now united with the Aſtaboras, takes its courſe ſtraight north for more than two degrees of the meridian; it then makes a very unexpected turn W. by S. conſiderably more than that ſpace in longitude, winding very little till it arrives at Korti, the firſt town in the Barabra, or kingdom of Dongola. The river by this time, with three ſides, incloſed the great deſerts of Bahiouda the road through this from Dereira to Korti (before it was cut off by the Arabs, as it now continues to be) made the fourth ſide of the ſquare which bound this deſert; by this route it was that Poncet and the unfortunate M. du Roule went to Abyſſinia.

From Korti the Nile runs almoſt S. W. where it paſſes Dongola, a country of the Shepherds, called alſo Beja, the capital of Barabra, and comes to Moſcho, a conſiderable town, and welcome place of refreſhment to the weary traveller, when the caravans were ſuffered to paſs from Egypt into Ethiopia, who, after traverſing the dreary deſert of Selima for near 500 miles, found himſelf at Moſcho, in repoſe, in the enjoyment of plenty of freſh water, long ago become to him an indulgence more delicious than ever he had before conceived. From Moſcho the Nile turns gradually to the N. E. and in lat. 22° 15′ it meets with a chain of mountains,

tains, and throws itſelf over them down a cataract called Jan Adel, which is its ſeventh cataract; and, continuing ſtill N. E. it paſſes Ibrim and Deir, two ſmall garriſons belonging to Egypt. The fall of the Nile in the country of Kennouſs, which forms the 8th cataract, and its courſe through Egypt, are already deſcribed in my voyage up the river.

CHAP. XVI.

Various Names of this River—Ancient Opinion concerning the Cauſe of its Inundation—Real Manner by which it is effected—Remarkable Diſpoſition of the Peninſula of Africa.

IT is not to be wondered, that, in the long courſe the Nile makes from its ſource to the ſea, it ſhould have acquired a different name in every territory, where a different language was ſpoken; but there is one thing remarkable, that though the name in ſound and in letters is really different, yet the ſignification is the ſame, and has an obvious reference to the dog-ſtar.

AMONG the Agow, a barbarous and idolatrous nation, it is called Gzeir, Geeſa *, Seir; the firſt of theſe names ſignifying *God;* it is alſo called Abba, or Ab, *Father;* and by many other terms which I cannot write in the language of that nation, whilſt, with a fervent and unfeigned devotion, under theſe, or ſuch-like appellations, they pray to the Nile, or ſpirit reſiding in that river. The next name it receives is when deſcended into Gojam, where it is called Abay. Foreigners, of all denominations, not acquainted with the language of the country, have, from hearing it was ſtiled Ab, *Father*, by the Agows, or Abai, imagined its name Abawi, a caſe of that noun, which, in their ignorance, they have made to ſignify, the Father.

---

* From a nation of Shangalla of that name, through which it runs, after having paſſed its ſource, and taken its courſe into Nubia.

Ludolf, the only one in the age he lived that had any real knowledge of either the Geez or Amharic, was the firſt to perceive this: he found in neither of theſe languages Abawi could be a nominative, and conſequently could not be applied to any thing; and next he as truly found it could not be of the ſingular number, and, if ſo, could not ſignify one river. He ſtopped, however, as it were, in the very brink of diſcovery, for he knew there was no writing or letters in Amharic, which were therefore neceſſarily borrowed from the old and written language Geez, ſo that all that could be done was, firſt, attentively to hear the pronunciation of the word in Amharic, and then to write it in Geez characters as nearly conformable to the ſound as poſſible. Now, the name of the river in Amharic is Abay, pronouncing the y open, or like two (i), and the ſenſe of that word ſo wrote in Geez, as well as Amharic, is, “the river “that ſuddenly ſwells, or overflows, periodically with rain;” than which a more appoſite name could never have been invented.

By the Gongas, on the ſouth of the mountains Dyre and Tegla, who are indigenæ, the river is called Dahli, and, on the north of theſe mountains, where the great cataracts are by the Guba, Nuba, and Shangalla, it is ſtiled Kowaſs, both which names ſignify *a watching dog*, the latrator anubis, or, the *dog-ſtar*. In the plain country, between Fazuclo and Sennaar, it is called Nil, which ſignifies *blue;* and the Arabs interpret it by the word Azergue, which it keeps as far as Halfaia, or near it, where it joins the White River.

The next name by which the Nile went was Siris: Pliny tells us it was called Siris both before and after it came into Beja. "*Nec ante Nilus, quam ſe totum aquis concordibus rurſus junxit.* "*Sic quoque etiamnum Siris, ut ante nominatus per aliquot millia, et in* "*totum Homero Egyptus, aliiſque Triton*[*]." This name the Greeks thought was given to it, becauſe of its black colour during the inundation, which miſtake preſently produced confuſion; and we find, according to this idea, the compiler of the Old Teſtament, (I ſhould ſuppoſe Eſdras, after the captivity) has tranſlated Siris, *the black river*, by the Hebrew, Shihor; but nobody ever ſaw the Nile black when it overflowed; and it would be a very ſtrong figure to call it ſo in Egypt, where it is always white during the whole of the inundation. Had Eſdras, or whoever it was that followed the Greek interpretation of Siris, viz. *black*, inquired in Beja what was the origin of this name, they would have there learned it imported the River of the Dog-ſtar, on whoſe vertical appearance this Nile, or Siris, overflows; and this idolatrous worſhip, paid to the Nile, was probably part of the reaſon of the queſtion the prophet Jeremiah aſks [†], "And what haſt "thou to do in Egypt, to drink the water of Seir? or the "water profaned by idolatrous rites?"

---

[*] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. v. cap. 9.

[†] Jerem. chap. ii. ver. xviii.

As for the firſt, it is only the tranſlation of the word Bahar, applied to the Nile. The inhabitants of the Barabra, to this day, call it Bahar el Nil, or, *the Sea of the Nile*, in contradiſtinction to the Red Sea, which they know by no other name but Bahar el Melech, the *Salt Sea*. The junction of the three great rivers; the Nile, flowing on the weſt of Meroë; the Tacazzé, which waſhes the eaſt ſide, and joins the Nile at Maggiran, in lat. 17°; and the Mareb, which falls into this laſt, ſomething above this junction—gives the name of Triton to the Nile.

MORE doubt has been raiſed as to the third name, Ægyptus, which it obtains in Homer, and which, I apprehend, was a very ancient name given it even in Ethiopia. The generality, nay, all interpreters, I may ſay, imagine, as in that of Siris, that this name was given it in relation to its colour, viz. *black;* but with this I cannot agree; Egypt, in the Ethiopic, is called *y Gipt*, Agar; and, an inhabitant of the country, *Gypt*, for preciſely ſo it is pronounced, which means the country of ditches, or canals, drawn from the Nile on both ſides at right angles with the river; nothing, ſurely is more obvious than to write y Gipt, ſo pronouncing Egypt, and, with its termination, *us*, or *os*, Egyptus. The Nile is alſo called *Kronides*, Jupiter; as alſo ſeveral other names; but theſe are rather the epithets of poets, relative and tranſitory, not the permanent appellation of the river.

I WOULD paſs over another name, that of Geon, which ſome of the fathers of the church have fondly given it, pretending it was one of the rivers that came from the terreſtrial paradiſe, and encompaſſed the whole land of Cuſh, whilſt, for this purpoſe, they bring it two thouſand miles by a ſeries of miracles, as it were, under the earth and under the ſea: To do what? to ſurround the whole land of Cuſh. And does it ſurround it, or does it ſurround any land whatever? This, and ſome ſimilar wonders told by St Auguſtine, have been eagerly catched at, and quoted by unbelieving ſceptics; meaning to inſinuate, that no better, in other reſpects, was the authority of theſe fathers when they explain and defend the truths of Chriſtianity. For my own part, though perfectly a friend to free and temperate inquiry, theſe injudicious arguments which I need not quote, have little weight with me. St Auguſtine, when explaining thoſe truths, was undoubtedly under the direction of that ſpirit which could not lie, and was promiſed to the prieſthood while occupied in their maſter's commiſſion the propagation of Chriſtian knowledge; but when, from vanity and human frailty, he attempted to eſtabliſh things he had nothing to do with, ſpeaking no longer by commandment, he reaſoned like a mere man, miſled by vanity and too great confidence in his own underſtanding.

We come now to inveſtigate the reaſon of the inundation of the Nile, which, being once explained, I cannot help thinking that all further inquiries concerning this ſubject are ſuperfluous.

It is an obſervation that holds good through all the works of Providence, That although God, in the beginning, gave an inſtance of his almighty power, by creating the world with one ſingle *fiat*, yet, in the laws he has laid down for the maintaining order and regularity in the details of his creation, he has invariably produced all theſe effects by the leaſt degree of power poſſible, and by thoſe means that ſeem moſt obvious to human conception. But it ſeemed, however, not according to the tenor of his ways and wiſdom, to create a country like Egypt, without ſprings, or even dews, and ſubject it to a nearly vertical ſun, that he might ſave it by ſo extraordinary an intervention as was the annual inundation, and make it the moſt fertile ſpot of the univerſe.

This violent effort ſeemed to be too great, above all proportion, for the end for which it was intended, and the cauſe was therefore thought to merit the application of the ſublimeſt philoſophy; and accordingly, as Diodorus Siculus * tells us, it became the ſtudy of the moſt learned men of the firſt ages, the principal of whom, with their opinions, he quotes, and at the ſame time alledges the reaſon why they were not univerſally received. The firſt is Thales of Miletum, one of the ſeven ſages, who aſſigns for the cauſe the Eteſian winds, which blowing, all the hot ſeaſon, from the Mediterranean, in contrary direction to the ſtream of the river, force the Nile to accumulate, by obſtructing its flowing to the ſea, occaſion it to riſe above its banks, and conſequently to overflow the country.

But to this it was anſwered, That, were this the cauſe, all rivers running in a northern direction, to the ſea, would be ſubject to the ſame accident; and this it was known they were not. And we may further add, that were this really the cauſe, the inundation of the Nile would be very irregular; for the winds at this ſeaſon often blow from the ſouth-weſt for two or three days together, and then the inundation would be interrupted. To this it muſt be added, that a very conſiderable part of Egypt, and that the moſt fertile,

---

* Diod. Sic. lib. i.

fertile, the Delta, is under the dominion of variable winds, which laſt long, from one point, at no time.

I SHALL treſpaſs upon my reader's patience, on this head, by no more than one additional obſervation. If the Eteſian winds, by oppoſing the ſtream, occaſioned the inundation, they could effect this no longer than they continued to blow. Now, it was an obſervation we made when on the Nile, and it was almoſt without exception, that as often as the Eteſian winds blew throughout the day, the night was either calm, or the wind blew gently from the ſouth or eaſt, ſo that it is morally impoſſible the river could have overflowed at all, without a much more powerful and conſtant agent than the Eteſian winds:—

> ———*Zephyros quoque vana vetuſtas*
> *His adſcripſit aquis;*——— LUCAN.

Vain, indeed! A philoſopher of the preſent age would be thought mad who ſhould rely on a ſyſtem ſo contrary to experiment and obſervation; though Thales, the propagator of this now mentioned, was ſo highly eſteemed for his knowledge.

THE next opinion quoted is that of Anaxagoras, who attributes the inundation of the Nile to ſnow melting in Ethiopia; and this Diodorus contradicts, for a very ſubſtantial reaſon, that there is no ſnow in Ethiopia to melt. But ſuppoſing all the mountainous part of Ethiopia north of the Line, that is all Abyſſinia, were covered with ſnow, then the inundation muſt happen in other months, as it muſt begin in January, for the ſun being then within few degrees

grees of being vertical, it muſt have been the very height of flood when the ſun paſſed over that country in April; whereas its increaſe is not diſcerned till about June, when the ſun has left the zenith of all Abyſſinia, having then paſſed over Nubia, and is ſtanding vertical to Syene, or as far to the northward as it can proceed.

It is not my meaning to maintain that there never was ſnow in Abyſſinia, as climates have wonderfully changed. In Cæſar's time, the greateſt rivers in the Gaul almoſt every year were frozen over for months, ſo that armed nations, with their families, cattle, and incumbrances, paſſed regularly over them upon the ice without fear; an event that happens not now once in a century. In Pruſſia[*] alſo were found white bears, an animal now confined to the ſevereſt ſnowy regions of the north; and, what comes ſtill nearer to the preſent ſubject, in the inſcription found in Abyſſinia by Coſmas Indoplauſtes, Ptolomæus Evergetes, ſpeaking there, in the firſt perſon, of his own conqueſts in Ethiopia, ſays, that he had paſſed the river Siris, and had entered the kingdom of Samen, a country intolerable on account of cold and deep ſnow.

This account I think almoſt incredible. Ptolemy parted from Egypt, his fleet coaſting along the Red Sea, oppoſite to his army, and carrying proviſions for it; we know, moreover, the time his ſhips ſailed, the beginning of June, when the Nile was overflowed, and conſequently of great utility to his army on the firſt part of his expedition, while he was in Egypt and part of Nubia. Now ſuppoſing him to paſs the deſert as quickly as poſſible, and come to Axum, it muſt have been then Summer, or near it; and as it was neceſſary his fleet ſhould return by the monſoon in October, ſo it muſt have then rained continually, and the ſun been perpendicular to the country when he found the deep ſnows in Samen, which is not very probable. The river Tacazzé, moreover, which Ptolemy croſſed, was really not paſſable at that time, and no Abyſſinian army did ever attempt it during a flood, though, without, ſcruple at all ſeaſons they croſs the Nile when moſt deep and rapid.

---

[*] Pauſanius Arcad. chap. xvii.

I REMEMBER that when I firſt aſcended Lamalmon, the higheſt mountain of that ridge, running the whole length of the province of Samen, it was in the depth of winter; the thermometer ſtood at 32°, wind N. W. clear and cold, but attended with only hoar froſt, though at that height, and at that ſeaſon; the graſs ſcarcely was diſcoloured, and only felt criſp below my feet, with this ſmall degree of freezing; but this vaniſhed into dew after a quarter of an hour's ſun, nor did I ever ſee any ſign of congelation upon the water, however ſhaded and ſtagnant, upon the top of that, or any other hill. I have ſeen hail indeed lie for three hours in the forenoon upon the mountains of Amid Amid.

THE opinion of Democritus was, that the overflowing of the Nile was owing to the ſun's attraction of ſnowy vapour from the frozen mountains of the north, which being carried by the wind ſouthward, and thawed by warmer climates, fell down upon Ethiopia in deluges of rain: and the ſame is advanced by Agatharcides of Cnidus in his Periplus of the Red Sea. This opinion of Democritus, Diodorus attempts to refute, but we ſhall not join him in his refutation, becauſe we are now perfectly certain, from obſervation, that Democritus and Agatharcides both of them had fallen upon the true cauſes of the inundation.

I SHALL now mention a treatiſe of a modern philoſopher, wrote expreſsly upon this ſubject, I mean a diſcourſe on the cauſes of the inundation of the Nile, by M. de la Chambre, printed at Paris in quarto, 1665, where, in a long dedication, he modeſtly aſſures the king, he is perſuaded that his majeſty will conſider, as one of the glories of his reign, the diſcovery of the true cauſe of the Nile's inundation, which he had then made, after it had baffled the inquiry of all philoſophers for the ſpace of 2000 years; and, indeed, the cauſe and the diſcovery would have been both very remarkable, had they been attended with the leaſt degree of poſſibility. M. de la Chambre ſays, that the nitre with which the ground in Egypt is impregnated, ferments like a kind of paſte, occaſioning the Nile to ferment likewiſe, and thus increaſes the maſs of water ſo much, that it ſpreads over the whole land of Egypt.

FAR be it from me to bear hard upon thoſe attempts with which the ancients endeavoured to ſolve thoſe phænomena, when, for want of a ſufficient progreſs in experimental philoſophy and obſervation, they were generally deſtitute of the proper means; but there is no excuſe for a man's either believing or writing, that earth, impregnated with ſo ſmall a quantity of any mixture as not to be diſcernible to the eye, ſmell, or taſte, could periodically ſwell the waters of a river, then almoſt dry, to ſuch an immenſity, as to cover the whole plains of Egypt, and diſcharge millions of tons every day into the ſea, at the ſame time that it contributed to the health of the people and the fertility of the land. It puts me in mind of an aſſertion of M. de Maillet, almoſt as abſurd as de la Chambre's treatiſe, that the Nile, which in Egypt is the only fountain of pleaſure, of health, and plenty, has a mixture of one tenth of mud during the time of the inundation: pleaſant and wholeſome ſtream, truly, to which Fleetditch would be Hippocrene.

But whatever were the conjectures of the dreamers of antiquity, modern travellers and philoſophers, deſcribing without ſyſtem or prejudice what their eyes ſaw have found that the inundation of Egypt has been effected by natural means, perfectly conſonant with the ordinary rules of Providence, and the laws given for the government of the reſt of the univerſe. They have found that the plentiful fall of the tropical rains produced every year at the ſame time, by the action of a violent ſun, has been uniformly, without miracle, the cauſe of Egypt being regularly overflowed.

The ſun being nearly ſtationary for ſome days in the tropic of Capricorn, the air there becomes ſo much rarified, that the heavier winds, charged with watery particles, ruſh in upon it from the Atlantic on the weſt, and from the Indian Ocean on the eaſt. The ſouth wind, moreover, loaded with heavy vapour, condenſed in that high ridge of mountains not far ſouth of the Line, which forms a ſpine to the peninſula of Africa, and, running northward with the other two, furniſh wherewithal to reſtore the equilibrium.

The ſun, having thus gathered ſuch a quantity of vapours as it were to a focus, now puts them in motion, and drawing them after it in its rapid progreſs northward, on the 7th of January, for two years together, ſeemed to have extended its power to the atmoſphere of Gondar, when, for the firſt time, there appeared in the ſky white, dappled, thin clouds, the ſun being then diſtant 34° from the zenith, without any one cloudy or dark ſpeck having been ſeen for ſeveral months before. Advancing to the Line with increaſed velocity, and deſcribing larger ſpirals, the ſun brings on a few drops of rain at Gondar the 1ſt of March, being then diſtant 5° from the zenith; theſe are greedily abſorbed by the thirſty ſoil, and this ſeems to be the fartheſt extent of the ſun's influence, capable of cauſing rain, which then only falls in large drops, and laſts but a few minutes: the rainy ſeaſon, however, begins moſt ſeriouſly upon its arrival at the zenith of every place, and theſe rains continue conſtant and increaſing after he has paſſed it, in his progreſs northward. Before this, green boughs and leaves appear floating in the Bahar el Abiad, and ſhew that, in the latitude where it riſes, the rains are already abundant. The Galla, who inhabit, or have paſſed that river, give account of its ſituation, which lies, as far as I could ever calculate, about 5° from the Line.

In April, all the rivers in Amhara, Begemder, and Laſta, firſt diſcoloured, and then beginning to ſwell, join the Nile in the ſeveral parts of its courſe neareſt them; the river then, from the height of its angle of inclination, forces itſelf through the ſtagnant lake without mixing with it. In the beginning of May, hundreds of ſtreams pour themſelves from Gojam, Damot, Maitſha, and Dembea, into the lake Tzana, which had become low by intenſe evaporation, but now begins to fill inſenſibly, and contributes a large quantity of water to the Nile, before it falls down the cataract of Alata. In the beginning of June, the ſun having now paſſed all Abyſſinia, the rivers there are all full, and then is the time of the greateſt rains in Abyſſinia, while it is for ſome days, as it were, ſtationary in the tropic of Cancer.

These rains are collected by the four great rivers in Abyſſinia; the Mareb, the Bowiha, Tacazzé, and the Nile. All theſe principal, and their tributary ſtreams, would, however, be abſorbed, nor be able to paſs the burning deſerts, or find their way into Egypt, were it not for the White River, which, riſing in a country of almoſt perpetual rain, joins to it a never-failing ſtream, equal to the Nile itſelf.

In the firſt days of May, the ſun, in his way to the northern tropic, is vertical over the ſmall village of Gerri, the limit of the tropical rains. Not all the influence of the ſun, which has already paſt its zenith, and for many days has been as it were ſtationary within a few degrees of it over Syene, in the tropic of Cancer, can bring them one inch farther to the northward, neither do any dews fall there as might be reaſonably expected from the quantity of freſh and exhalable water that is then running in the Nile, though it paſſes cloſe by that village, and after, through that wild and dreary deſert. The fact is certain, and ſurely curious; the cauſe perhaps unknown, although it may be gueſſed at.

I conceive, that mountains are neceſſary to occaſion either rain or dew, by arreſting and ſtopping the great quantity of vapour which is here driven ſouthward before the Eteſian winds. Now, all that country between Gerri and Syene is flat and deſert, ſo that this interruption is wanting; and it is owing to the ſame cauſe, that the bounds of the tropical rains do ſtop farther to the ſouthward as you travel weſtward, and in place of lat 16°, which is their limits at Gerri, they are confined within lat. 14° in that part of the kingdom of Sennaar which lies ſouth and weſt of that capital, where all is free from mountains till you come to thoſe of Kuara and Fazuclo.

Yet although the ſun's influence when at its greateſt, is not ſtrong enough to draw the boundaries of the ſummer's rain farther north than Gerri, all the time that it is in the tropic of Cancer at its greateſt diſtance, theſe rains are then at their heavieſt throughout all Abyſſinia; and Egypt, and all its labours, would ſoon be ſwept into the Mediterranean did not the ſun now begin to change its ſphere of action by haſtening its progreſs ſouthward.

From Syene the ſun paſſes over the deſert, and arrives at Gerri; here he reverſes the effects his influence had when on his paſſage northward; for whereas, in his whole courſe of declination northward, from the Line to Gerri, he brought on the rains at every place where he became vertical, ſo now he cuts off thoſe rains the inſtant he returns to the zenith of each of thoſe places paſſing over Abyſſinia in his journey ſouthward, till arrived at the Line, in the autumnal equinox, his influence ceaſes on the ſide of Abyſſinia, and goes to extend itſelf to the ſouthern hemiſphere. And ſo preciſely is this ſtupendous operation calculated, that, on the 25th of September, only three days after the equinox, the

Nile

Nile is generally found at Cairo to be at its higheſt, and begins to diminſh every day after.

Thus far as to the cauſe and progreſs of the Nile's inundation in our northern hemiſphere; but ſo much light and confirmation is to be drawn from our conſideration of the remainder of the ſun's journey ſouthward, that I am perſuaded my following him thither will require no apology to my philoſophic or inquiſitive reader.

Immediately after the ſun has paſſed the Line he begins the rainy ſeaſon to the ſouthward, ſtill as he approaches the zenith of each place; but the ſituation and neceſſities of this country being varied, the manner of promoting the inundation is changed. A high chain of mountains run from about 6° ſouth all along the middle of the continent towards the Cape of Good Hope, and interſects the ſouthern part of the peninſula nearly in the ſame manner that the river Nile does the northern. A ſtrong wind from the ſouth, ſtopping the progreſs of the condenſed vapours, daſhes them againſt the cold ſummits of this ridge of mountains, and forms many rivers which eſcape in the direction either eaſt or weſt, as the level preſents itſelf. If this is towards the weſt, they fall down the ſides of the mountains into the Atlantic, and if on the eaſt, into the Indian Ocean. Now all theſe would be uſeleſs to man, were the Eteſian winds to reign, as one would think muſt be the caſe, analagous to what paſſes in Egypt; nay, if any one wind prevailed, theſe rivers, ſwelled with rains, would not be navigable, but another wiſe and providential diſpoſition has remedied this.

THE clouds, drawn by the violent action of the ſun, are condenſed, then broken, and fall as rain on the top of this high ridge, and ſwell every river, while a wind from the ocean on the eaſt blows like a monſoon up each of theſe ſtreams in a direction contrary to their current, during the whole time of the inundation, and this enables boats to aſcend into the weſtern parts of Sofala, and the interior country to the mountains, where lies the gold. The ſame effect, from the ſame cauſe, is produced on the weſtern ſide towards the Atlantic; the high ridge of mountains being placed between the different countries weſt and eaſt, is at once the ſource of their riches, and of thoſe rivers which conduct to the treaſures which would be otherwiſe inacceſſible in the eaſtern parts of the kingdoms of Benin, Congo, and Angola.

THERE are three remarkable appearances attending the inundation of the Nile; every morning in Abyſſinia is clear, and the ſun ſhines. About nine, a ſmall cloud, not above four feet broad, appears in the eaſt, whirling violently round as if upon an axis, but, arrived near the zenith, it firſt abates its motion, then loſes its form, and extends itſelf greatly, and ſeems to call up vapours from all oppoſite quarters. Theſe clouds having attained nearly the ſame height, ruſh againſt each other with great violence, and put me always in mind of Eliſha foretelling rain on Mount Carmel*. The air, impelled before the heavieſt maſs, or ſwifteſt mover, makes an impreſſion of its own form in the collection of clouds oppoſite, and the moment it has taken poſſeſſion of the ſpace made to receive it, the moſt violent thunder poſſible to be conceived inſtantly follows, with rain; after ſome hours, the ſky again clears, with a wind at north, and it is always diſagreeably cold when the thermometer is below 63°.

---

* 1 Kings, chap. xviii. ver. 43.

THE ſecond thing remarkable is the variation of the thermometer; when the ſun is in the ſouthern tropic, 36° diſtant from the zenith of Gondar, it is ſeldom lower than 72°; but it falls to 60° and 59° when the ſun is immediately vertical; ſo happily does the approach of rain compenſate the heat of a too-ſcorching ſun.

THE third is, that remarkable ſtop in the extent of the rains northward, when the ſun, that has conducted the vapours from the Line, and ſhould ſeem, now more than ever, to be in poſſeſſion of them, is here over-ruled ſuddenly, till, on its return to the zenith of Gerri, again it reſumes the abſolute command over the rain, and reconducts it to the Line to furniſh diſtant deluges to the ſouthward.

I CANNOT omit obſerving here the particular diſpoſition of this peninſula of Africa; ſuppoſing a meridian line, drawn through the Cape of Good Hope, till it meets the Mediterranean where it bounds Egypt, and that this meridian has a portion of latitude that will comprehend all Abyſſinia, Nubia, and Egypt below it, this ſection of the continent, from ſouth to north, contains 64° divided equally by the equator, ſo that, from the Line to the ſouthmoſt point of Africa, is 32°; and northward, to the edge of the Mediterranean, is 32° alſo: now, if on each ſide we ſet off 2°, theſe are the limits of the variable winds, and we have then 30° ſouth, and 30° north, within which ſpace, on both ſides, the

trade-

trade-winds are confined; ſet off again 16° from the 32°, that is, half the diſtance between the Cape of Good Hope and the Line, and 16° between the Line and the Mediterranean, and you have the limits of the tropical rains, 16° on each ſide of the equator: again, take half of 16°, which is 8°, and add it to the limit of the tropical rains, that is to 16°, and you have 24°, which is the ſituation of the tropics.—There is ſomething very remarkable in this diſpoſition.

CHAP. XVI.

Egypt not the Gift of the Nile—Ancient Opinion refuted—Modern Opinion contrary to Proof and Experience.

IT is here we ſhall diſcuſs a queſtion often agitated, whether Egypt owed its exiſtence to the Nile, and whether it was formerly an arm of the ſea, but in proceſs of time, being filled up by the quantity of mud which the Nile depoſited in its inundation, it at length became firm land, above the ſurface of the waters? I believe this is the general opinion, as well of the books, as of the greateſt part of travellers of the preſent age; it therefore merits examination, whether it is founded in fact and obſervation, or whether it is to be ranked among the old and ill-ſupported traditions fancifully now again brought into faſhion.

EGYPT is a valley bounded on the right and left by very rugged mountains; it muſt, therefore, occur to any one that the Nile, being a torrent falling from very high ground in Ethiopia, were this valley concave, the violent rapidity, or motion, would be much likelier to carry away mud and ſoil, than to leave it behind in a ſtate to accumulate.

The land of Egypt ſlopes gently from the middle of the valley to the foot of the mountains on each ſide, ſo that the center is really the higheſt part of the valley, and in the middle of this runs the Nile *. At right angles with the ſtream large trenches are cut to the foot of the mountains, in which canals the water enters, and inſenſibly flows down to the end of theſe trenches, where it diffuſes itſelf over the level ground.

As the river ſwells, theſe canals fill with water, which goes ſeeking a level to the foot of the mountains; ſo that now the flood, which begins to reſtagnate towards the bank of the river, acquires no motion, as the caliſhes are formed at right angles to the ſtream. Sometimes, indeed, the river is ſo high, when the rains in Ethiopia are exceſſive, that the back-water joins the current of the Nile, when immediately it communicates its motion to the ſtagnant water, and ſweeps away every thing that is planted into the ſea. It is a miſtake then to aſſert,—the fuller the Nile, the better for Egypt.

It has been ſaid by various authors, that it was neceſſary Egypt ſhould be meaſured every year, on account of the

---

* See this figure in Dr Shaw, chap. ii. ſect. 3. p. 385.

the quantity of mud which the Nile brought down by its inundation, which ſo covered the land-marks, that no proprietor knew or could diſcover the limits of his own farm, and that this annual neceſſity firſt gave riſe to the ſcience of Geometry *. How or when Geometry was firſt known and practiſed, is not my buſineſs in this place to inquire, though I think the origin here given is a very probable one. The land of Egypt was certainly meaſured annually: it is as certainly ſo at this very time; and if ſo, the preſent reaſon for this is probably the very one which firſt gave riſe to it; but that this is not owing to the mud of the Nile, will appear on the ſlighteſt conſideration; for if Egypt increaſe a foot in a hundred years, one year's increaſe of ſoil could be but the one hundredth part of a foot, which could hide no land-mark whatever; and we ſee to this day thoſe in Egypt were huge blocks of granite often with gigantic heads at the end of them; which the Nile, at the rate Herodotus fixes, of a foot in 100 years, as being added to the ſoil, would not cover in ſeveral thouſand years.

It is abſurd to ſuppoſe that the Nile is to bring down an equal quantity of ſoil every year from the mountains of Abyſſinia; whatever was the caſe at firſt when this river began to flow, we are ſure now, that almoſt every river and brook in Abyſſinia runs in a bed of hard ſtone, the earth having been long removed; and the rivers now cannot furniſh from their rocky beds what they firſt did from their earthy bottoms, when Egypt was ſuppoſed, according to Herodotus, to have its foundation laid in the floods;

---

* Herod, lib. ii. p. 127. ſect. 109.

floods; and therefore, on the firſt conſideration, this annual and equal increaſe muſt be impoſſible.

At Baſboch, before the Nile enters Sennaar, I made ſeveral hundred trials upon its ſediment, as it then came down from the cultivated country of Abyſſinia; I thereby found this ſediment ſurpriſingly ſmall, being a mixture of fat earth, and a ſmall quantity of ſand. At the junction of the Nile and Aſtaboras I did the ſame, taking up the water from the middle of the ſtream, and, having evaporated it afterwards, I found little more ſediment than at Sennaar; the water was indeed whiter, and the greateſt part of the ſediment was ſand. I repeated this experiment at Syené with the utmoſt attention, where the Nile leaves Nubia, and enters Egypt, and I found the quantity of ſediment fully nine times increaſed from what it was at Sennaar, and in it only a trifle of black earth, all the reſt being ſand. The experiment at Roſetto was not ſo often repeated as the others; but the reſult was, that, in the ſtrength of the inundation, the ſediment conſiſted moſtly of ſand, and, towards the end, was much the greater part of earth. I think theſe experiments concluſive, as neither the Nile coming freſh from Abyſſinia, nor the Atbara, though joined by the Mareb, likewiſe from the ſame country, brought any great quantity of ſoil from thence.

It was at Syené that the water ſhould have been moſt charged with mud, for all the acceſſion it was to bring to Egypt was then in its ſtream; but there the chief part of the ſediment was ſand, fanned and ventilated with perpetual hot winds, and ſpread on the ſurface of the burning deſert, never refreſhed with the dew of heaven. In that dreary deſert, between Gooz and Syene, we ſaw huge pillars of this light ſand; their baſe in the earth, and heads in the clouds, croſſing the wide expanſe in various directions, and, upon its becoming calm in the evening, falling to pieces, and burying themſelves in the Nile, with whoſe ſtream they mixed like an impalpable powder, and were hurried down the river, to compoſe the many ſandy iſlands we ſee in the courſe of it.

It ſeems to be an eſtabliſhed fact, that water of every ſort, freſh and ſalt, that of rivers, and what is ſtagnant, has from early times ſenſibly diminiſhed through the whole world; if then the land of Egypt has been continually riſing every year, while the quantity of water that was to cover it has become leſs, or at leaſt not increaſed, dearth in theſe latter years muſt have been frequent in Egypt, for want of the Nile's riſing to a proper height; but this is ſo far from being the caſe, that, in theſe laſt 34 years*, there has not been one ſeaſon of ſcarcity from the lowneſs of the Nile, although the riſe having been too great, and the waters too abundant, have thrice in that time occaſioned famine by carrying away the millet.

If the land of Egypt increaſed (as Herodotus ſays) one foot in 100 years, this addition muſt have appeared in the moſt ancient public monuments: now, the very baſe of all the obeliſks in Upper Egypt, are bare and viſible, and even the paved plane, laid viſibly on purpoſe to receive the Gnomonical ſhade, is not covered, nor ſcarcely out of its level, and theſe ſmall deviations are apparently owing to the falling of neighbouring buildings. There are in the plain, immediately before Thebes, two Coloſſal ſtatues*, obviouſly deſigned for Nilometers, covered with hieroglyphics, as well as more modern inſcriptions; theſe ſtatues are uncovered to the loweſt part of their baſe; whereas we ſhould have now been walking on ground nearly equal in height to their heads. The ſame may be ſaid of every public monument, if there had been any truth in the ſurface of Egypt increaſing a foot in a hundred years.

---

* Several Arabian MSS. atteſt this.

It appears, at leaſtas far as Hadrian's time, that if the *pecus* of the Greeks be the peek of the preſent Egyptians, the ſame quantity of water overflowed Egypt as now.

The advocates for the ſuppoſed increaſe of the land of Egypt on a foot in 100 years, preſſed by this obſervation, which they cannot contradict, have choſe to evade it, by ſuppoſing, without foundation, that a ſmaller meaſure of the Nile's increaſe had been introduced by the Saracens to obviate the Nile's ſcantineſs, and this has landed them in a palpable abſurdity; for, while the Nile failed, the introduction of a leſſer meaſure would not have increaſed the crop; and, if the quantity of grain had been exacted when it was not produced, this would have only doubled the diſtreſs, and made it more apparent; this would never have occaſioned the joyful cry, *Wafaa Ullah*, God has given us our deſire, *men Jibbel, alla Jibbel*, the Nile has overflowed, from the mountains on one ſide of the valley to the mountains on the other. Beſides,

---

* Shaamy and Taamy, of whom we have already ſpoken.

ſides, there is no country in the world, perhaps, but where this trick may be played with impunity, except in Egypt, for a reaſon that I am about to explain.

The extenſion of the land of Egypt northward, the diſtance between it and Cyprus, and the ſituation of Canopus, all ſhew, that no or very little alteration has been made theſe 3000 years. Dr Shaw, and the other writers, who are advocates for what has been advanced by Herodotus *, that Egypt hath been produced by the Nile, have deſerted this ground of maintaining their hypotheſis, and have recourſe to the Nilometer to prove, that the ſoil has increaſed in height, and that a greater quantity of water is neceſſary now to overflow the land of Egypt than was required in the days of Homer.

If the firſt part of their aſſertion can be proved, I ſhall make no ſort of difficulty of giving up the other. But I rather conceive, that none of thoſe who have written upon this ſubject hitherto, whatever degree of learning and information they may have poſſeſſed, have poſſeſſed ſufficient *data* to explain this ſubject intelligibly. It ſeems, indeed, to have remained with *the ſource of the river*, a ſecret reſerved for latter times.

It will be neceſſary for us firſt to conſider what the uſe of a Nilometer was, for what cauſe it was made, and by whom.

---

* Herod. Eut. ſect. 4, 5. Diod. Sic. lib. iii. p. 101. Ariſt. Meteorol. lib. i. cap. 14.

It is ſcarcely neceſſary to obſerve, that, in every ſtate or ſociety, the product or revenue ſhould be known, as well as what will be wanted for the ſupply of the neceſſities of the people. Now, it was only the ground overflowed by the Nile that could produce grain for the ſubſiſtence of the inhabitants and revenue of the ſtate.

The firſt conſideration, then, was, to know how much of the land of Egypt was overflowed in a given term of years, and how much grain was produced upon that average. This could only be aſcertained by meaſuring, and they, therefore, ſettled with preciſion the land that was overflowed from the earlieſt times, and do ſo to this day. Theſe actual meaſurements gave them a *maximum* and a *minimum*, which furniſhed them with a mean, and thus they were in poſſeſſion of all the principles neceſſary for making a Nilometer, by dividing a pillar into correſponding cubits, and diviſions of cubits called digits, placing it alſo firm and perpendicular, ſo as to be liable to no alteration or injury, though in the middle of the ſtream.

The firſt ſtated meaſure was certainly that mentioned in ſcripture, the cubit, *ſecundum cubitum virilis manus*, meaſuring from the center of the round bone in the elbow to the point of the middle finger *. This is ſtill the meaſure of all unpoliſhed nations, but no medium or term, expreſſive of its exact contents, having been applied, writers have differed as to the length of this cubit, and no ſtandard exiſting to which it might be referred, a great deal of confuſion has thereupon followed. Dr Arbuthnot [*] ſays, that there are two cubits in ſcripture, the one, 1 foot 9 inches, and $\frac{888}{1000}$ parts of an inch, according to our meaſure, being the 4th part of a fathom, twice the ſpan, and ſix times the palm. The other is equal to 1 foot $\frac{824}{1000}$ parts of a foot, or the 400dth part of a ſtadium. I ſhall not inquire into the grounds he goes on; I believe, however, that neither are preciſely the ancient cubit of the eaſt, but both are too large; at leaſt the Egyptian I found to be very exactly 1 foot $5\frac{3}{5}$ inches, which is 2 inches more than father Merſenne [†] has made his Hebrew cubit. But this is of leſs conſequence to us now, becauſe Herodotus [‡] informs us, that in his time, and probably at the firſt inſtitution of a Nilometer, the meaſure was the Samian cubit, which is about 18 inches Engliſh, or half an inch leſs than the ancient cubit.

---

* Deut. chap. iii. ver. 11.

The reader will then conſider, that the diviſions of this Nilometer were a repreſentation of certain facts: That the Nile's reaching to ſuch a diviſion correſponded to a certain quantity of corn that was ſown, a proportion of the produce of which was to be paid to the king, the reſt to go to the landlord and the labourer.

The Nilometer then aſcertained the contract between king and people on theſe terms, That, in the event of ſo much corn being produced by the land of Egypt, ſuch a tribute was to be paid: But, in caſe a certain quantity of ground, leſs than that, was overflowed, or, which is the ſame thing, a leſſer quantity of grain was produced, then the

---

[*] Encyclop. voce Cubit. [†] Vide Encyclop. voce Cubit. [‡] Herod. lib. ii. ſect. 168. p. 149.

king was not to exact his tribute, becauſe it was underſtood ſuch a quantity only was produced as was ſufficient for the maintenance of the landholder and labourer. This was referred to the Nilometer, whoſe diviſion ſhewed to what height the Nile had riſen. Men appointed by the ſovereign were to ſuperintend this Nilometer, and to publiſh the height of the Nile, whilſt the reaſon why the king was to have the direction of the Nilometer, and not his ſubjects, was very obvious, though it has not yet been underſtood, becauſe the king could not gain by ſubſtituting falſe meaſures, whereas the people might.

The Nile, though in an average of years it brought down nearly the ſame quantity of water, yet, in particular ones, it varied ſometimes more and ſometimes leſs. It is likewiſe obſerved, like moſt other rivers, to run more on one ſide of the valley for ſome years than to the other. The conſequence of this varying and deviation was, that though, upon the whole, the quantity indicated by the Nilometer was the ſame, yet nobody knew his *quota*, or what proportion of the whole was drawn from the property of each individual; as for this they were obliged to apply to actual menſuration. Suppoſing a man's property was a ſection of the land of Egypt, of 12,000 feet from the brink of the river to the mountain, and of any given breadth, 4000 feet of this perhaps were overflowed, whilſt the other 8000 remained dry, and above the level of the water. The tenant, after having meaſured, did not till then know what his farm of 12,000 feet would give him for that year, only 4000 of which had been overflowed by the water, and was then fit for ſowing; for this he paid his landlord the higheſt rent laid upon cultivated land. But the 8000 feet that ſtill remained were not equally uſeleſs, though not overflowed by the inundation; for 4000 of the 8000, which lay by the bank of the river, could be overflowed by machines, and by the labour of man, when, for a certain time, the river was high enough to be within reach of machinery; ſo that the value of this 4000 feet to the farmer was equal to the firſt, *minus* the expence and trouble it coſt him for watering it by labour; for this, then, he paid one half of the rent only to the landlord.

Now, though it was known that the whole farm was 12,000 feet, yet, till it was meaſured, no one could ſay how much of that would be overflowed by the Nile alone, and ſo manured without expence; how much was to be watered by labour, and ſo pay half rent; and how much was to be incapable of any ſuch cultivation, and for that year equally uſeleſs to landlord and tenant. I ſpeak not of a fact that happened in antiquity, but one that is neceſſary and in practice at this very hour; and though a man, by this menſuration, attains to the knowledge of what his farm produces this ſame year, this is no general rule, as his cultivated land next year may be doubled, or perhaps reduced to one-fourth; and his neighbour, on the other ſide of the Nile, may in his farm make up the correſpondent deficiency, or exceſs; and the average quantity produced by them both being the ſame, the degree of the Nilometer will be the ſame likewiſe.

FROM this it is obvious to infer, that there are two points of great advantage to the tenant: The one is, when it is juſt high enough not to pay the meery *, for then he has all the harveſt to himſelf, and pays nothing, though he has very near the ſame quantity as if he was ſubject to the tax. The other is, when near the whole of theſe 12,000 feet is overflowed by the Nile, but before the water is in contact with the current of the river; for then, though he is liable to pay the meery, he has ſown the greateſt part of his land poſſible, without additional labour or expence; more than this is loſs, for then the water of the inundation is put likewiſe in motion, and all the floating pulveriſed earth that has been trode into an impalpable powder, during March, April, and May, is ſwept away by the current into the ſea, and nothing left but a bare, cold, hard till, which produces little, and is not eaſily pulveriſed by the poor inſtruments of huſbandry there in uſe, when neither farmer nor landholder pays any thing, becauſe, indeed, there is not any receipt.

HOWEVER, from this uncertainty one thing ariſes which does not ſeem to have been underſtood; for the tenant, not knowing preciſely the quantity of ſeed that he may want, comes to his farm unprovided, and, being uncertain of its produce, takes his land only from year to year; the landlord furniſhes him with ſeed †, and even with all labouring utenſils.

AND here I am to explain what I have before advanced, what to ſome will ſeem a paradox, That the ſubſtituting

---

* The king's yearly land-tax, or rent.

† Gen. chap. xlvii. ver. 20 & 23.

falſe meaſures in the Nilometer by the ſovereign is abſolutely impracticable. Suppoſing the height of the Nilometer, when at 8 cubits, ſhewed that there was juſt corn enough to maintain the inhabitants, and that the tenant knew, by the quantity of land meaſured, that he had barely what was to pay his rent and ſupport his family; this he muſt know before he ſowed, becauſe he meaſured immediately after the inundation; and this he muſt know likewiſe by the corn he borrows for ſeed from his landlord, who, as I have ſaid, furniſhes his tenant both with ſeed and labouring utenſils. If, then, he finds he can barely maintain himſelf, and not pay his rent, upon the proclamation at the Nilometer, he deſerts his farm, and neither plows nor ſows [*], but flies to Paleſtine to the Arabs, or into the cities, and brings famine along with him. The next year there is a plague, and ſweeps all thoſe poor wretches, in a bad ſtate of health by living upon bad food, into their graves, ſo that the introduction, of a ſuppoſed falſe meaſure, directly advanced by Dr Shaw [†], and often alluded to by others, but always without poſſibility of foundation, is one of the many errors he has fallen into.

HE knew nothing but of the Delta, never was in Upper, and no conſiderable time even in Lower Egypt, but when the Nile had overflowed it, and I ſuppoſe never converſed with a fellah, or Egyptian peaſant, in his life. All his *wonders* are in the land of *Zoan*[*], and his obſervations ſhould have reached no further, becauſe they are not fact, but fanciful imaginations of his own; not from any bad intention, but becauſe he never was in the way of being better informed, but determined not to abandon a ſyſtem he had once formed.

---

[*] This was apparently the reaſon why Joſeph, who had bought not only the lands, but the people of Egypt likewiſe, transferred them from farms, not convenient for them, to others where they could thrive. The ſame they do ſpontaneouſly at this day, now they are free.

[†] Dr Shaw, chap. ii. ſect. 3. p. 383.

Herodotus[†] mentions, that in the time of Mæris, when the minimum came to be 8 Samian cubits, all Egypt below Memphis was overflowed, but that in his days it took 16 cubits, or at leaſt 15, to put the ſame land in like condition for cultivation; or, in other words, the minimum, when they paid their meery, was 16, or at leaſt 15 cubits in his time; and the uncertainty of theſe two terms ſhews, that there were unaccountable inequalities, even in his days, as we ſhall find there have been ever ſince. But I muſt here beg leave to aſk, why we ſhould believe Herodotus knew the management of the Nilometer more than travellers have done ſince, as he tells us conſtantly throughout this part of his hiſtory, that when he inquired of the prieſts concerning the Nile, they would tell him nothing about it[‡]?

In Mæris's time there were great lakes dug, as Herodotus ſays[||], to carry off the ſuperfluous water, to what place is not ſaid, but ſurely into the deſert for the uſe of the Arabs. Now, unleſs we knew what time theſe lakes were opened to receive the ſtream, we do not know whether it was the evacuation by the lake, or ſcarcity of the water that impeded the riſe of the Nile upon the Nilometer. We have no account of theſe tranſactions, and we ſhall be leſs inclined to rely upon them, when I ſhall ſhew, that the Nilometer could be of no uſe in ſolving this queſtion at all, either in Herodotus's days, or any time ſince, without a previous knowledge of ſeveral other circumſtances never yet taken into the calculation, and of which Herodotus muſt have been ignorant.

---

[*] Pſalm lxxviii. ver. 12. [†] Herod. eut. ſect. 13. [‡] Herod. lib. ii. ſect. 19.

[||] Herod, lib. ii. ſect. 4. 101. and 149.

But let us grant that the Nile in Mæris's time roſe only 8 cubits, and in the days of Herodotus to 16, let us ſee if, at certain periods afterwards, it kept to any thing like that proportion. Above 400 years after Herodotus, Strabo travelled in Egypt; he went through the whole country from Alexandria to beyond Syene and the firſt cataract; and as he is an hiſtorian whoſe character is eſtabliſhed, both for veracity and ſagacity, we may receive what he ſays as unexceptionable evidence, eſpecially as he travelled in ſuch company as it is not probable the prieſts could have refuſed him any thing. Now Strabo[‡] ſays, that, in his days, 8 cubits were a *minimum*, or the *Waſaa Ullah* of the Nile's increaſe; therefore, from Mæris's time to Strabo there is not an inch difference in the *minimum*, and this includes the ſpace of 1400 years.

It may be ſaid, indeed, that the paſſage in Strabo[†] imports, that, in the time of Petronius, by a particular care of the banks and caliſhes, the Nile at 8 peeks (or cubits) enabled the Egyptians to pay their meery without hardſhip; but this was by particular induſtry, more than what had been in

---

[*] Strabo, lib. xiii. p. 945.

[†] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 915.

in common uſe, and this, too, I conceive to be Strabo's meaning. But let us compute from Herodotus, who ſays that 16, or at leaſt 15, were neceſſary in his time, whilſt Strabo informs us, that, before Petronius exerted himſelf as to the banks and caliſhes juſt mentioned, the extreme abundance muſt then have been at 12, and the *minimum* at 10. Now, by this paſſage, beyond all exception, it is clear that there could have been no increaſe indicated by the Nilometer; for 10 cubits watered the whole land of Egypt ſufficiently in Strabo's time, whereas 16 and 15 were neceſſary in the days of Herodotus: and I muſt likewiſe obſerve, that if we ſhould ſuppoſe the ſame induſtry and attention uſed in Mæris's time that was in Petronius's, (and there is every reaſon to induce us to think there was) then the proof is poſitive, that there was no difference in the ſoil of Egypt indicated by the Nilometer for the firſt 1400 years.

From this let us deſcend to Hadrian, about 100 years afterwards. We know from Pliny*, and from an inſcription upon a medal of great braſs of Hadrian's, who was himſelf in Egypt, that 16 cubits were then the fiſcal term or riſe of the Nile, by which the Egyptians paid their rent; and this is preciſely what Herodotus ſays, in his time, was no more than ſufficient.

About the beginning of the 4th century, in the emperor Julian's reign†, 15 cubits were a ſufficient minimum to incur the payment of the tribute, and this is one of the terms that

---

* Plin. lib. xxxvi. cap. 7. Philoſt. de icon. Nili.

† Julian. Epiſt. egdicio prefecto Egypti.

that Herodotus fixes upon, as being ſufficient to oblige the payment in his days; and the other is 16, or a cubit more; ſo that if the Nilometer proves any thing at all, it is this, that preſumptively the Nile has never increaſed from Mœris to Petronius's, or in 1400 years, and certainly that, if it has not diminiſhed, it has not increaſed for 700 years from Herodotus to the emperor Julian.

Procopius, in his firſt book, I think, ſays, that 18 peeks was too full a Nile, and occaſioned dearth by its quantity. But, in the middle of the 6th century, he tells* us it required 18 cubits for a minimum, by which Egypt was to pay the meery; ſo that in 100 years from Julian to Juſtinian, the minimum had increaſed three cubits, which was 4½ feet; not one foot in 100 years as the propoſition bears; and this would prove too much, if it was true, but it is impoſſible.

Thus far, then, we are at liberty to ſay, that, as long as Egypt was a Greek kingdom, no viſible alteration or increaſe of the ſoil can be fairly eſtabliſhed from hiſtory or inſpection.

---

[*] Procop. lib. iii. de Reb. Goth.

CHAP. XVII.

The ſame Subject continued—Nilometer what. How divided and meaſured.

IN the 7th century a revolution happened that ſtops our Grecian account from proceeding farther, Egypt was conquered by an ignorant and barbarous enemy, the Saracen, and Amru Ibn el Aas was governor of Egypt for Omar, the ſecond Caliph after Mahomet. Omar was a foreigner, conqueror, bigot and a tyrant; he deſtroyed the Grecian Nilometer from motives of religion, the ſame which had before moved him to burn the library of Alexandria; and after, with the ſame degree of *ſound judgment*, determined to eſtabliſh his empire at Medina, in the middle of the peninſula of Arabia, a country without water, and ſurrounded on all ſides with barren ſands; but he was nevertheleſs deſirous of feeding his famiſhed Saracens with the wheat of Egypt, a province he had ſubdued; for this purpoſe he ordered Amru to begin a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, to carry the wheat to the

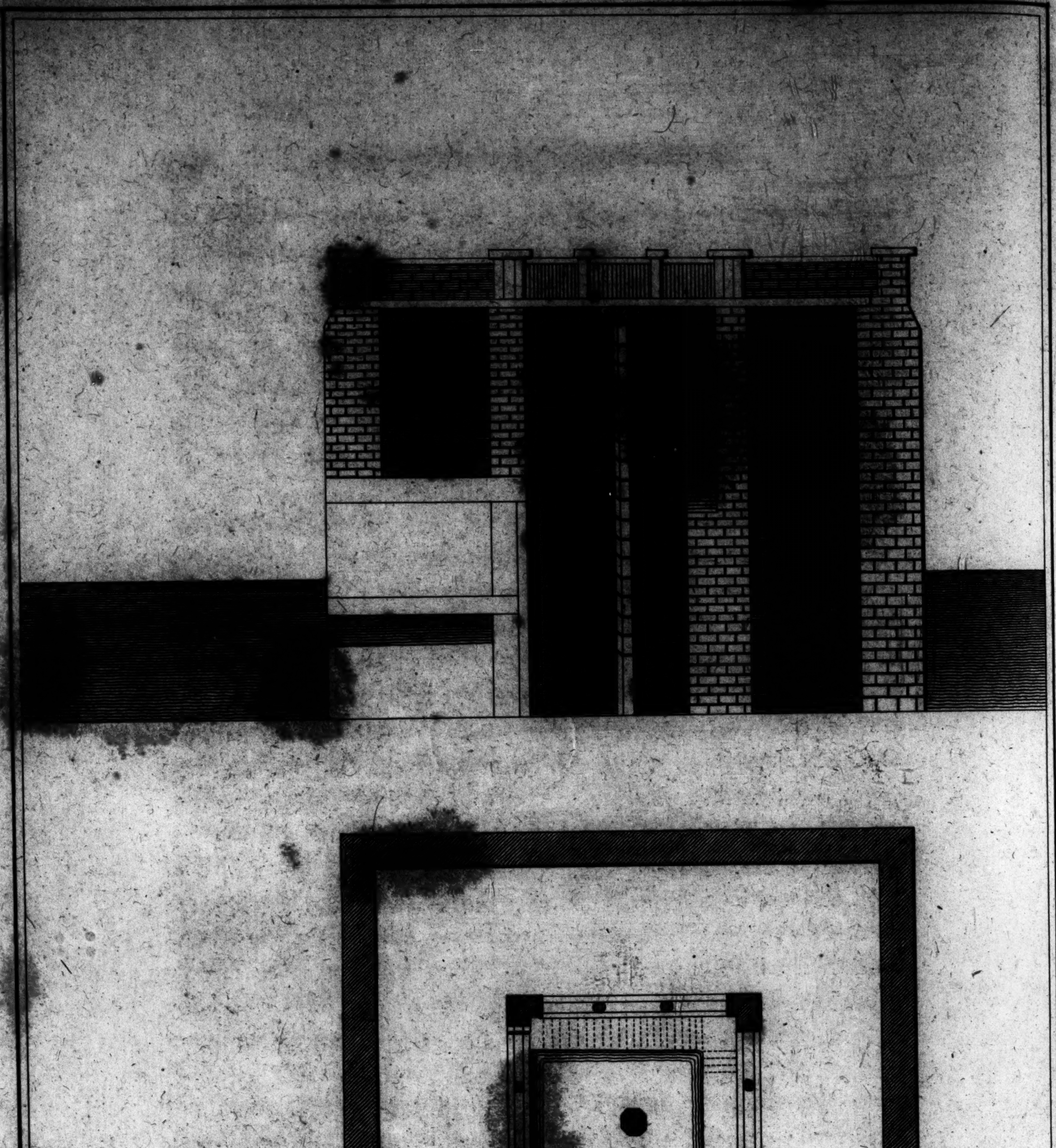
Arabian Gulf, and thence to Yambo, the port of Medina on that gulf.

The traitor Greeks, who had delivered the country to the Saracens. had probably informed him of the great plenty which conſtantly reigned in Egypt, and which every body had an opportunity of knowing by the cheapneſs of grain at the market.

Omar thought that a larger tribute was due to put the conquerors a little more upon a footing with the conquered; for Egypt, which had once 20,000 cities, had not then the tenth part of them. Having therefore a larger extent to cultivate, with the ſame quantity of water, it produced more grain, and at the ſame time having fewer people to eat it, nothing was leſs oppreſſive than that a part of the ſurplus of the produce ſhould go in augmentation of the tribute. For this purpoſe, following the very weak lights of his own judgment, he introduced a different meaſure on the Nilometer, and the conſequence of that meaſure, impoſed by a conqueror, affected the people (not reflecting upon their decreaſe in population) ſo much, that they prepared to fly the country; from which it immediately would have followed, that all Egypt would have lain deſolate and uncultivated, and all Arabia been ſtarved.

They were perfectly acquainted with their ancient meaſure, and it is probable that Omar made an exceſſive addition by the new Nilometers which he had erected; ſo that faith being thereby broken between the government and people, the Egyptians ſet about watching the Nile upon the Nilometer with its new meaſure, as the only way of being informed when poverty or famine was to overtake them. This being told

GR III
BRITISH MUSEUM


10
20
30
40
50 Feet

Mikeas.

London Published Decr. 1st 1789. by G. Robinson & Co.

told to Omar, he ordered the new Nilometer to be demoliſhed; but as it had been part of the complaint to him, that their counting the diviſions of the Mikeds[*] was the reaſon why the people were kept in continual terror, he ſhut up the acceſs to Chriſtians, and that prohibition continues in Cairo to this day; and, inſtead of permitting ocular inſpection, he ordered the daily increaſe to be proclaimed, but in a manner ſo unintelligible, that the Egyptians in general no longer underſtood it, nor do they underſtand it now; for, beginning at a given point, which was not the bottom of the Nilometer, he went on, telling the increaſe by ſubtracting from the upper diviſion; ſo that as nobody knew the lower point from which he began, although they might comprehend how much it had riſen ſince the crier proclaimed its increaſe, yet they never could know the height of the water that was in the Nilometer when the proclamation began, nor what the diviſion was to which it had aſcended on the pillar.

To underſtand this, let us premiſe, that, on the point of the iſland Rhoda, between Geeza and Cairo, near the middle of the river, but nearer to Geeza, is a round tower, and in that an apartment, in the middle of which is a very neat well, or ciſtern, lined with marble, to which the Nile has free acceſs, through a large opening like an embraſure, the bottom of the well being on the ſame level with the bottom of the river. In the middle of this well riſes a thin column, as far as I can remember, of eight faces of blue and white marble, to the foot of which, if you are permitted to deſcend,

---

[*] Or Nilometer.

you are then on the ſame plane with the foot of the column and bottom of the river. This pillar is divided into 20 peeks, called Draa El Belledy, of 22 inches each[*].

The two lowermoſt peeks are not divided at all, but are left abſolutely without mark, to ſtand for the quantity of ſludge the water depoſits there, and which occupies the place of water. Two peeks are then divided on the right hand into 24 digits each; then, on the left, four peeks are divided each into 24 digits; then, on the right, four; and, on the left, another four: again, four on the right, which complete the number of 18 peeks from the firſt diviſion marked on the pillar each of 22 inches. The whole, marked and unmarked, amounts to $36\frac{8}{12}$ feet Engliſh.

On the night of St John, when the Nucta has fallen, that is, when they ſee the rain-water from Ethiopia is ſo mixed with the Nile that at Cairo it is become exhalable, and falls down in dews upon the earth, which till that time it never does, they then begin to cry, having five peeks of water marked on the Mikeas, and two unmarked for the ſludge, of which they take no notice in the proclamation. Their firſt proclamation, ſuppoſe the Nile hath riſen 12 digits, is 12 from ſix, or it wants 12 digits to be ſix peeks. When it riſes three more, it is nine from ſix, or, *Tiſſa am Sitte*, and ſo it goes on, ſubtracting the digits from the upper number, without giving you any information what that ſix is, or that they began to count from five, which I ſuppoſe is the aſſumed depth of the Nile before it begins to increaſe.

When

[†] Vid. geometrical elevation and plan of the Mikeas.

WHEN the river has riſen on the Mikeas eight peeks and 23 digits, they then call *Wahad am erba Tuſh*, i. e. one from 14, five peeks of water being left marked in the Mikeas, but only eight of augmentation that has riſen upon the column, according to the diviſions, which make in all 13 peeks and 23 digits, which wants one from being nine of augmentation, and that being added, they cry *Wafaa Ullah*, which obliges the country to the payment of the meery. Again, ſuppoſe 17 peeks, or cubits, and 23 digits to ſtand on the column, the cry is *Wahad am temen Tuſh*, i. e. one from 18, and, upon this being filled, and the diviſions complete by a certain day in Auguſt, the next is *Aſhareen*, 20, or, *men Jibbel*, *alla Jibbel*, from mountain to mountain, that is, 18 peeks marked on the pillar, and two unmarked at the foot of it, ſuppoſed to be covered with mud. All the land of Egypt is then fitted for cultivation; the great canal at Manſoura, and ſeveral others, are opened, which convey the water into the deſert, and hinder any further ſtagnation on the fields, though there is ſtill a great part of the water to come from Ethiopia, but which would not drain ſoon enough to fit the land for tillage, were the inundation ſuffered to go on.

Now, from theſe 16 peeks the *Wafaa Ullah* if we deduce 5, which were in the well, and marked on the column when the crier began, there will have been but 11 peeks of riſe as a minimum, which ſtill made the meery due, or 15, deducing 5 from 20, the maximum, *men Jibbel*, *alla Jibbel*, the increaſe that fits all Egypt for cultivation, after which is loſs and danger. Therefore, ſuppoſe the 16 peeks on the medal of Hadrian to have been the minimum or fiſcal term, we muſt infer, that the ſame quantity of inundation produced the

the *Waſoa Ullah* or payment of the meery, in Hadrian's time, that it does at this day, and conſequently the land of Egypt has not increaſed ſince his time, that is, in the laſt 1600 years.

As a ſummary of the whole relating to this periodical inundation of the Nile, I ſhall here deliver my opinion, which I think, as it is founded upon ancient hiſtory, conſonant to that of intermediate times, and, invincibly eſtabliſhed by modern obſervation, can never be overturned by any argument whatever. And this I ſhall do as ſhortly as poſſible, leſt, having anticipated it in part by reflections explanatory of the narrative, it may at firſt ſight have the appearance of repetition.

IT is agreed on all hands, that Egypt, in early ages, had water enough to overflow the ground that compoſed it. It was then a narrow valley as it is now; having been early the ſeat of the arts, crowded with a multitude of people, enriched by the moſt flouriſhing and profitable trade, and its numbers ſupplied and recruited when needful by the immenſe nations to the ſouthward of it, having grain and all the neceſſaries and luxuries of life (oil excepted) for the great multitude which it fed, Egypt was averſe to any communication with ſtrangers till after the foundation of Alexandria.

THE firſt princes, after the building of Memphis, finding the land turn broader towards the Delta, whereas before it had been a narrow ſtripe confined between mountains; obſerving alſo that they had great command of water for fitting their land for cultivation, nay, that great part of it ran to waſte without profit, which muſt have been the caſe, ſince it is ſo at this day: obſerving likewiſe, that the ſuperabundance of water in the Nile did harm, and that the neighbouring ſandy plains of Libya needed nothing but a judicious diſtribution of that water, to make it equal to the land of Egypt in fertility, and ſurpaſs it in the variety of natural productions, applied themſelves very early to digging large lakes*, that, preſerving a degree of level ſufficient, all the year long watered the dry deſerts of Libya like ſo many fruitful ſhowers. Geometry, architecture, and all the mechanic arts of thoſe times, were employed to accompliſh thoſe deſigns. Theſe canals and vaſt works communicated one with another to impriſon the water, and ſet it again at liberty at proper times.

We may be ſatisfied this was obſerved attentively all the time of the dynaſties, or reigns of the Egyptian princes. After the acceſſion of the Ptolemies, who were ſtrangers, the multitude of inhabitants had greatly decreaſed. There was no occaſion for works to water lands that were not peopled; ſo far as they were neceſſary for cities, gardens, and pleaſure-grounds, they were always kept up. The larger and more extenſive conduits, dykes, and ſluices, though they were not uſed, were protected by their own ſolidity and ſtrength from ſudden ruin. Egypt, now confined within its ancient narrow valley, had water enough to keep it in culture, and make it ſtill the granary of the inhabited world.

---

* We know that theſe lakes were dug, and in uſe as early as Moſes's time. Exod. chap vii. ver. 19. chap. viii. ver. 5.

When the ancient race of the Ptolemies ended, a ſcene of war and confuſion, and bad government at home, was ſucceeded by a worſe under foreigners abroad. The number of its inhabitants was ſtill greatly decreaſed, and the valley had yet a quantity of water enough to fit it for annual culture.

In the reign of the ſecond emperor after the Roman conqueſt, Petronius Arbiter, a man well known for taſte and learning, was governor of Egypt. He ſaw with regret the decay of the magnificent works of the ancient native Egyptian princes. His ſagacity penetrated the uſefulneſs and propriety of thoſe works. He ſaw they had once made Egypt populous and flouriſhing. Like a good citizen and ſubject of the ſtate he ſerved, and from a humane and rational attachment to that which he governed, he hoped to make it again as flouriſhing under the new government as it had been under the old. Like a man of ſenſe, and maſter of his ſubject, he laughed at the daſtardly ſpirit of the modern Egyptians, anxious and trembling leſt the Nile ſhould not overflow land enough to give them bread, when they had the power in their hands to procure plenty in abundance for ſix times the number of the people then in Egypt. To ſhew them this, he repaired their ancient works, raiſed their banks, refitted their ſluices, and by thus impriſoning, as I may ſay, the inundation at a proper time in the beginning, he overflowed all Egypt with 8 peeks of water, as fully, and as effectually, as to the purpoſes of agriculture, as before and ſince it hath been with 16; and did not open the ſluices to allow the water to run and waſte in the deſert (where there was now no longer any inhabitants), till the land of the valley of Egypt had been ſo well watered as only to need that the inundation ſhould retire in time to leave the farmer the ground firm enough for plowing and ſowing.

LET any one read what I have already quoted from Strabo; it is juſt what I have here repeated, but in fewer words. Let him conſider how fair an experiment this of Petronius was, that by re-eſtabliſhing the works of Mæris, and putting the inundation to the ſame profit that Mæris did, he found the ſame quantity of water overflow the ſame quantity of ground, and conſequently, that the land of Egypt had not been raiſed an inch from Mæris's time to that of Petronius, above 1400 years.

Now the ſecond part of the queſtion comes, what difference of meaſure was made by the Saracens, and how does it now ſtand, after that period, as to the ſuppoſed riſe of a foot in a hundred years? It is now above 1100 years ſince the † firſt of the Hegira, and near 900 years ſince the erection of the preſent Mikeas, which being equal to the period between Mæris and Herodotus, and again to that between Herodotus and Julian, we ſhould begin to be certain if any ſuch increaſe in the land has ever, from Mæris to the preſent time, been indicated by the Nilometer.

THE reader will perhaps be ſurpriſed, at what I am going to advance, That thoſe writers, as well as their ſupporters who have pronounced ſo poſitively on this ſubject, have not furniſhed themſelves with the *data* which are abſolutely neceſſary to ſolve this queſtion. Quantity is only to be aſcertained

---

† A. C. 622.

certained by meaſure, yet none of them have ſettled that only medium of judging. The Mikeas, or pillar, is the ſubject to be meaſured, and they are not yet agreed within 20 feet of its extreme height, nor about the diviſion of any part of it. As this accuſation appears to be a ſtrong one, I ſhall ſet down the proof for the reader's conſideration, that it may not be ſuppoſed I mean to criticiſe improperly, or to do any author injuſtice.

AND firſt of the Mikeas. Mr Thomas Humes, a gentleman quoted by[*] Dr Shaw, who had been a great many years a factor at Cairo, ſays, that the Mikeas is 58 feet Engliſh in height. Now, there is really no reaſon why ſuch an enormous pillar ſhould have been built, as the Nile would drown all Cairo before it was to riſe to this height; accordingly, as we have ſeen, its height is not ſo much by near 22 feet. Dr Perry[†] next, who has wrote largely upon the ſubject, ſays, the Mikeas, or column, is divided into 24 peeks, and each peek or cubit is 24 inches nearly. Dr Pococke[‡], who travelled at the ſame time, agrees in the diviſion of 24 peeks, but ſays that theſe peeks are unequal. The 16 lower he ſuppoſes are 21 inches, the 4 next, 24 inches, and the uppermoſt, 22. So that one of theſe gentlemen makes the Mikeas 43 feet, which is above ſix feet more than the truth, and the other 48, which is above 11; beſides the ſecond error which Dr Pococke has committed, by ſaying the diviſions are of three different dimenſions, when they really are not any one of them what he conceives, nor is the Mikeas divided unequally.

---

[*] Shaw's Travels, chap. ii. ſect. 3. p. 382.

[†] Deſcript. of the Eaſt, vol. I. p. 256.

[‡] A View of the Levant, p. 282. 284. 286.

As for Mr Humes, who had lived long at Cairo, I would by no means be thought to inſinuate a doubt of his veracity: There may, in change of times, be occaſions when Chriſtians may be admitted to the Mikeas, and be allowed to meaſure exactly. This, however, muſt be with a long rod, divided and brought on purpoſe, with a high ſtool or ſcaffold, and this ſort of preparation would be attended with much danger if ſeen in the hand of a Chriſtian without, and much more if he was to attempt to apply it to the column within. At Cairo a man may ſee or hear any thing he deſires, by the ordinary means of gold, which no Turk can withſtand or refuſe; but often one villain is paid for being your guide, and another villain, his brother, pays himſelf, by informing againſt you; the end is miſchief to yourſelf, which, if you are a ſtranger, generally involves alſo your friends. You are aſked, What did you at the Mikeas when you know it is forbidden? and your ſilence after that queſtion is an acknowledgement of guilt; ſentence immediately follows, whatever it may be, and execution upon it. I rather am inclined to think, that though ſeveral Chriſtians have obtained admiſſion to the Mikeas, very few have had the means or inſtruments, and fewer ſtill the courage, to meaſure this column exactly; which leads me to believe, as Dr Shaw ſays, he procured the number of feet in a letter from Mr Humes, that the Doctor has miſtaken 58 for 38, which, in a foreign hand, is very eaſily done; it would then be 38, inſtead of 58 Engliſh feet, and to that number it might approach near enough, and the difference be accounted for, from an aukward manner of meaſuring with a trembling hand, there being then only a little more than one foot of error.

From what I have juſt now mentioned, I hope it is ſufficiently plain to the reader, that the length and diviſion of the column in the Mikeas, by which the quantity of water, and conſequently the increaſe of the ſoil, was to be determined, was utterly unknown to thoſe travellers who had undertaken this mode of determining it.

I shall now inquire, whether they were better inſtructed in the length of that meaſure, which, after the Saracen conqueſt, was introduced into the Nilometer, of Geeza, where it has remained unaltered ſince the year 245? Dr Shaw introduces the conſideration of this ſubject by an enumeration of many different peeks, ſeven of which he quotes from Arabian authors, as being then in uſe. Firſt, the Homaræus $1\frac{2}{9}$ digit of the common cubit. 2. The Haſamean, or greater peek, of 24 digits. 3. The Belalæan, leſs than the Haſamean. 4. The black cubit leſs than the Belalean $2\frac{2}{3}$ digits. 5. The Joſſippæan $\frac{2}{3}$ of a digit leſs than the black cubit. 6. The Chord, or Aſaba, $1\frac{2}{3}$ digit leſs than the black peek. 7. The Maharanius, $2\frac{2}{3}$ digits leſs than the black cubit*. Now, I will appeal to any one to what all this information amounts, when I am not told the length of the common peek to which he refers the reſt, as being $1\frac{1}{2}$ digit, or 2 digits more or leſs. He himſelf thinks that the meaſuring peek is the Stambouline peek, but then, for computation's ſake, he takes a peek of his own invention, being a medium of 4 or 5 gueſſes, and fixes it at 25 inches, for which he has no authority but his own imagination.

---

* Shaw, p. 380. 381.

I will not perplex the reader more with the different meaſures of theſe peeks; between the Haſamean and great peek of Kalkaſendas, which is 18 inches, and the black peek, a model of which Dr Bernard[*] has given us from an Arabic MS. at Oxford, the difference is 10 inches. The firſt being 18 inches equal to the Samian peek, the other 28½ inches, and from this difference we may judge, joining to the uncertainties of the height and diviſions of the Mikeas, how impoſſible it is for us to determine the increaſe of 12 inches in a hundred years.

As the generality of writers have fixed upon the Conſtantinople, or Stambouline peek, for the meaſure of the Mikeas, in which choice they have erred, we will next ſeek what is the meaſure of the Stambouline peek, and whether they have in this article been better informed.

M. de Maillet, French conſul at Cairo, ſays, that this peek is equal to two French feet, or very nearly 26 inches of our meaſure: to add another miſtake, he ſtates, that by this peek the Mikeas is meaſured; and, for the completing of the confuſion, he aſſerts, that the Nile muſt riſe 48 French feet before it covers *all their lands*. What he means by all their lands is to very little purpoſe to inquire, for he would probably have been drowned in his cloſet, in which he made theſe computations, long before he had ſeen the Nile at that height, or near it.

Without, then, wandering longer in this extraordinary confuſion, which I have only ſtated to ſhew that a traveller

may

---

[*] Deſcript. de l'Egypte, p. 60.

may differ from Dr Shaw, and yet be right; and that this writer, however learned he may be, cannot, for want of information, be competent to ſolve this queſtion which he ſo much inſiſts upon, I ſhall now, with great ſubmiſſion to the judgment of my reader, endeavour to explain, in as few words as poſſible, how the real ſtate of the matter ſtands, and he will then apply is as he pleaſes.

THERE was a very ingenious gentleman whom I met at Cairo, M. Antes, a German by birth, and of the Moravian perſuaſion, who, both to open to himſelf more freely an opportunity of propagating his religious tenets, and to gratify his own mechanical turn, rather than from a view of gain, to which all his ſociety are (as he was) perfectly indifferent, exerciſed the trade of watch-maker at Cairo. This very worthy and ſagacious young man was often my unwearied and uſeful partner in many inquiries and trials, as to the manner of conſtructing ſome inſtruments in the moſt compendious form for experiments propoſed to be made in my travels. By his aſſiſtance, I formed a rod of braſs, of half an inch ſquare, and of a thickneſs which did not eaſily warp, and would not alter its dimenſions unleſs with a violent heat. Upon the three faces of this braſen rod we traced, with good glaſſes and dividers, the meaſure of three different peeks, then the only three known in Cairo, the exact length of which was taken from the ſtandard model furniſhed me by the Cadi. The firſt was the Stambouline peek, exactly $26\frac{7}{12}$ inches; the ſecond, the Hendaizy, of $24\frac{9}{12}$ inches; and the third the peek El Belledy, of 22 inches, all Engliſh meaſure.

It was natural to ſuppoſe, that, after knowing, as we do, that no alteration has been made in the Mikeas ſince the 245th year of the Hegira, that the peek of Conſtantinople, a foreign meaſure, was probably then not known, nor introduced into Egypt; nor, till after the conqueſt of Sultan Selim, in the year 1516, was it likely to be the peek with which the Mikeas was meaſured. It did not, as I conceive, exiſt in the 245th of the Hegira, though, even if it had, its dimenſions may have been widely different from thoſe fixed upon by the number of writers whoſe authority we have quoted, but who do not agree. It was not likely to be the Hendaizy peek either, for this, too, was a foreign meaſure, originally from the iſland of Meroë, and well known to the Egyptians in Upper Egypt, but not at all to the Saracens their preſent maſters. The peek, El Belledy, the meaſure in common uſe, and known to all the Egyptians, was the proper cubit to be employed in an operation which concerned a whole nation, and was, therefore, the meaſure made uſe of in the diviſion of the Mikeas, for that column, as I have ſaid, is divided equally into peeks, or draas, called *Draa El Belledy*, conſiſting of 22 inches; and each of theſe peeks is again divided into 24 digits.

A very ingenious author, who treats of the particular circumſtances of thoſe times, in his MS. called *Han el Mohaderat*, ſays, that the inhabitants of Seide counted 24 peeks on their Nilometer, when there were 18 peeks marked as the riſe of the water upon the Mikeas at Rhoda; and this ſhews perfectly two things: Firſt, That they knew the whole ſecret of counting there both by the marked and unmarked part of the column; for the peek of the Mikeas being 22 inches Engliſh, it was, by conſequence, four inches larger each peek than the Samian peek; ſo that if, to 20 peeks of Seide, you add twenty times four inches, which is 80, the difference of the two peeks, when divided by 18, gives four, which, added to the 20 peeks on the column, make 24 peeks, the number ſought. Secondly, That this obſervation in the Han el Mohaderat ſufficiently confirms what I have ſaid both of the length of the column and length of the peek; that the former is 20 peeks in height, and that the meaſure, by which this is aſcertained, is the peek El Belledy of 22 inches, as it appears on the braſs rod, four inches longer than the Samian peek, and conſequently is not the peek of Stambouline, nor any foreign meaſure whatever.

A TRAVELLER thinks he has attained to a great deal of preciſion, when, obſerving 18 peeks on the higheſt diviſion of the column from its baſe, or bottom of the well, he finds it 37 feet; he divides this by 18, and the quotient is 24 inches; when he ſhould divide it by 20, and the anſwer would be 22 and a fraction, the true content of the peek El Belledy, or peek of the Mikeas. This erroneous diviſion of his he calls the peek of the Mikeas; and comparing it with what authors, leſs informed than himſelf, have ſaid, he names the Stambouline peek, and then the black peek, when it really is his own peek, the creature of his own error or inadvertence; but, as he does not know this, it is handed down from traveller to traveller, till unfortunately it is adopted by ſome man of reputation, and it then becomes, as in this caſe, a ſort of literary crime to any man, from the authority of his own eyes and hands, to diſpute it.

Mr Pococke makes two very curious and ſenſible remarks in point of fact, but of which he does not know the reaſon. "The Nile, he ſays, in the beginning, turns red, and ſometimes green; then the waters are unwholeſome. He ſuppoſes that the ſource of the Nile beginning to flow plentifully, the waters at firſt bring away that green or red filth which may be about the lakes at its riſe, or at the riſe of theſe ſmall rivers that flow into it, near its principal ſource; for, though there is ſo little water in the Nile, when at loweſt, that there is hardly any current in many parts of it, yet it cannot be ſuppoſed that the water ſhould ſtagnate in the bed of the Nile, ſo as to become green. Afterwards the water becomes very red and ſtill more turbid, and then it begins to be wholeſome *."

The true reaſon of this appearance is from thoſe immenſe marſhes ſpread over the country about Narea and Caffa, where there is little level, and where the water accumulates, and is ſtagnant, before it overflows into the river Abiad, which riſes there. The overflowing of theſe immenſe marſhes carry firſt that diſcoloured water into Egypt, then follows, in Abyſſinia, the overflowing of the great lake Tzana, through which the Nile paſſes, which, having been ſtagnated and without rain for ſix months, under a ſcorching ſun, joins its putrid waters with the firſt. There are, moreover, very few rivers in Abyſſinia that run after November, as they ſtand in prodigious pools below, in the country of the Shangalla, and afford drink for the elephant, and habitation and food for the hippopotamus. Theſe pools likewiſe throw off their ſtagnant water into the Nile on receiving the firſt rains; at

---

* Pococke, vol. i. p. 199. 200.

at laſt the rivers, marſhes, and lakes, being refreſhed by ſhowers, (the rain becoming conſtant) and paſſing through the kingdom of Sennaar, the ſoil of which is a red bole; This mixture, and the moving ſands of the deſerts, fall into the current, and precipitate all the viſcous and putrid ſubſtances, which cohere and float in the river; and thence (as Pococke has well obſerved) the ſign of the Nile being wholeſome, is not when it is clear and green, but when mingled with freſh water, and after precipitation it becomes red and turbid, and ſtains the water of the Mediterranean.

The next remark of Mr Pococke * is equally true. It has been obſerved, ſays he, that after the rainy ſeaſon is over, the Nile fallen, and the whole country drained from inundation, it has begun again to riſe; and he gives an inſtance of that in December 1737, when it had a ſudden increaſe, which alarmed all Egypt, where the received opinion was that it preſaged calamities. This alſo is ſaid to have happened in the time of Cleopatra, when their government was ſubverted, their ancient race of kings extinguiſhed in the perſon of that princeſs, and Egypt became a province to the Romans.

The reader will not expect, in theſe enlightened times, that I ſhould uſe arguments to convince him, that this riſing of the Nile had nothing to do with the extinction of the race of the Ptolemies, though popular preachers and prophets have always made uſe of theſe fortuitous events to confirm the vulgar in their prejudices.

The

---

* Pococke, vol. i. p. 201.

The rains, that ceaſe in Abyſſinia about the 8th of September, leave generally a ſickly ſeaſon in the low country; but other rains begin towards the end of October, in the laſt days of the Ethiopic month Tekemt, which continue moderately about three weeks, and end the 8th of November, or the 12th of the Ethiopic month Hedar. All ſickneſs and epidemical diſeaſes then diſappear, and the 8th of that month is the feaſt of St Michael, the day the king marches, and his army begins their campaign; but the effect of theſe ſecond rains ſeldom make any, or a very ſhort appearance in Egypt, all the canals being open. But theſe are the rains upon which depend their latter crops, and for which the Agows, at the ſource of the Nile, pray to the river, or to the genius reſiding in the river. We had plentiful ſhowers both in going and coming to that province, eſpecially in our journey out. Whenever theſe rains prove exceſſive, as in ſome particular years it ſeems they do, though but very rarely, the land-floods, and thoſe from the marſhes, falling upon the ground, already much hardened and broken into chaſms, by two months intenſe heat of the ſun, run violently into the Nile without ſinking into the earth. The conſequence is this temporary riſing of the Nile in December, which is as unconnected with the good and bad crops of Egypt, as it is on thoſe of Paleſtine or Syria.

The quantity of rain that falls in Ethiopia varies greatly from year to year, as do the months in which it falls. The quantity that fell, during 1770, in Gondar, between the vernal equinox and the 8th of September, through a funnel of one foot Engliſh in diameter, was 35.555 inches; and, in

1771,

1771, the quantity that fell in the ſame circumference was 41.355 inches in the ſame ſpace *.

In 1770, Auguſt was the rainy month; in 1771 July. Both theſe years the people paid the meery, and the *Wafaa Ullah* was in Auguſt. When July is the rainy month, the rains generally ceaſe for ſome days in the beginning of Auguſt, and then a prodigious deal falls in the latter end of that month and the firſt week of September. In other years, July and Auguſt are the violent rainy months, whilſt June is fair. And laſtly, in others, May, June, July, Auguſt and the firſt week of September. Now we ſhall ſuppoſe (which is the moſt common caſe of all) that every month from June doubles its rain. The *Wafaa Ullah* generally takes place about the 9th of Auguſt, the tribute being then due, and all attention to the Mikeas is abandoned at 14 real peeks, the Caliſh is then cut, and the water let down to the Delta.

Now theſe 14 peeks are not a proof how much water there is to overflow the land; for ſuppoſing nine days for its paſſage from Ethiopia, then the 9th of Auguſt receives at Cairo no later rains than thoſe that have fallen the 1ſt of Auguſt in Ethiopia, and from that date till the 17th of September, the Nile increaſes one third of its whole inundation, which is never ſuffered to appear on the Mikeas, but is turned down to the lakes in the Delta, as I ſuppoſe it always has been; ſo that the quantity of water which falls in Ethiopia hath never yet been aſcertained, and never can be by the Mikeas, nor can it ever be known what quantity of water comes in to Egypt, or what quantity of ground it is ſufficient to overflow, unleſs the dykes were to be kept cloſe till the Nile attained its extreme height, which would be about the 25th of September, long before which it would be over the banks and mounds, if they held in till then, or have ſwept Cairo and all the Delta into the Mediterranean, and if it ſhould not do that, it would retire ſo late from the fields as to leave the ground in no condition to be ſown that year.

---

* See Table, or Regiſter of Rain, that fell in theſe years, inſerted at the end of this volume.

I do not comprehend what idea other travellers have formed of the beginning of the inundation of the Nile, as they ſeem to admit that the banks are not overflowed; and this is certainly the caſe; becauſe the cities and villages are built there as ſecurely as on the higheſt part of Fgypt, and even when the Nile has riſen to its greateſt height they ſtill are obliged to water thoſe ſpots with machines. In another part of the work it is explained how the caliſhes carry the water upon the lands, approaching always to the banks as the river riſes in proportion, and theſe caliſhes being derived from the Nile at right angles with the ſtream, and carrying the water by the inclination of the ground, in a direction different from the courſe of the river, the water is perfectly ſtagnated at the foot of the hills, till accumulated as the ſtream riſes, it moves in a contrary direction backwards again, and approaches its banks. But when the inundation is ſo great that the back-water comes in contact with the current of the Nile, by known laws it muſt partake the ſame motion with it, and ſo all Egypt become one torrent.

Dr Shaw, indeed *, ſays, that there ſeems to be a deſcent from the banks to the foot of the mountains, but this he conſiders as an optic fallacy; I wiſh he had told us upon what principle of optics; but if it was really ſo, how comes it that the banks are every year dry, when the foot of the mountains is at ſame time under inundation; or, in other words, what is the reaſon of that undiſputed fact, that the foot of the mountains is laid under water in the beginning of the rivers riſing, while the ground which they cultivate by labour near the banks, cannot ſupply itſelf from the river by machines, till near the height of the inundation? theſe facts will not be contraverted by any traveller, who has ever been in Upper Egypt; but if this had been admitted as truth inſtead of an optic fallacy, this queſtion would have immediately followed. If the land of Egypt at the foot of the mountains, is the loweſt, the firſt overflowed, and the longeſt covered with water, and often the only part overflowed at all, whence can it ariſe that it is not upon a level with the banks of the river if it is true that the land of Egypt receives additional height every year by the mud from Abyſſinia depoſited by the ſtream? and this queſtion would not have been ſo eaſily anſwered.

The Nile for theſe thirty years has but once ſo failed as to occaſion dearth, but never in that period ſo as to produce famine in Egypt. The redundance of the water ſweeping every thing before it, has thrice been the cauſe, not of dearth, but of famine and emigration; but careleſſneſs, I

---

* Shaw's Travels, ſect. 4. p. 401.

believe, hath been, the occaſion of both, and very often the malice of the Arabs; for there are in Egypt, from Siout downwards, great remains of ancient works, vaſt lakes, canals, and large conduits for water, deſtined by the ancients to keep this river under controul, ſerving as reſervoirs to ſupply a ſcanty year, and as drains, or outlets, to prevent the over abundance of water in wet years, by ſpreading it in the thirſty ſands of Libya to the great advantage of the Arabs, rather than letting it run to waſte in the Mediterranean. The mouths of theſe immenſe drains being out of repair, in a ſcanty year, contribute by their evacuation to make it ſtill ſcantier by not retaining water, and if after a dearth they are well ſecured, or raiſed too high, and a wet ſeaſon follows, they then occaſion a deſtructive inundation.

I HOPE I have now ſatisfied the reader, that Egypt was never an arm of the ſea, or formed by ſediments brought down in the Nile, but that it was created with other parts of the globe at the ſame time, and for the ſame purpoſes; and we are warranted to ſay this, till we receive from the hand of Providence a work of ſuch imperfection, that its deſtruction can be calculated from the very means by which it was firſt formed, and which were the apparent ſources of its beauty and pre-eminence. Egypt, like other countries, will periſh by the *fiat* of Him that made it, but when, or in what manner, lies hid where it ought to be, inacceſſible to the uſeleſs, vain inquiries, and idle ſpeculations of man.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Inquiry about the Poſſibility of changing the Courſe of the Nile—Cauſe of the Nucta.

IT has been thought a problem that merited to be conſidered, Whether it was poſſible to turn the current of the Nile into the Red Sea, and thereby to famiſh Egypt? I think the queſtion ſhould more properly be, Whether the water of the Nile, running into Egypt, could be ſo diminiſhed, or diverted, that it ſhould never be ſufficient to prepare that country for annual cultivation? Now to this it is anſwered, That there ſeems to be no doubt but that it is poſſible, becauſe the Nile, and all the rivers that run into it, and all the rains that ſwell thoſe rivers, fall in a country fully two miles above the level of the ſea; therefore, it cannot be denied, that there is level enough to divert many of the rivers into the Red Sea, the Indian, and Atlantic Oceans, or, perhaps, ſtill eaſier, by turning the courſe of the river Abiad till it meets the level of the Niger, or paſs through the deſert into the Mediterranean.

Lalibala, as we have already ſeen, attempted the former method with great appearance of ſucceſs; and this prince, to whom the accidental circumſtances of the time had given extraordinary powers, and who was otherwiſe a man of great capacity and reſolution, might, if he had perſevered, completed his purpoſe, the thing being poſſible, that is, no law of nature againſt it, and all difficulties are only relative to the powers veſted in thoſe who are engaged in the undertaking. Alexander the Great would have ſucceeded—his father Philip would have miſcarried—Lewis the XIV. would perhaps have accompliſhed it, as eaſily as he united the two ſeas by the canal of Languedoc, and with the ſame engineers; but he is the only European prince of whom this could have been expected with any degree of probability.

Alphonso Albuquerque, viceroy of India, is ſaid to have wrote frequently to the king of Portugal, Don Emanuel, to ſend him ſome pioneers from Madeira, people accuſtomed to level ground, and prepare it for ſugar-canes, with whoſe aſſiſtance he was to execute that enterpriſe of turning the Nile into the Red Sea, and famiſhing Egypt. His ſon mentions this very improbable ſtory in his * father's commentaries; and he ſays further, that he imagines it might have been done, becauſe it was a known fact that the Arabs in Upper Egypt, when in rebellion againſt the Soldan, uſed to interrupt the courſe of the canal between Coſſeir on the Red Sea, and Kenna in Egypt.

---

* Alph. d'Albuquerque, Comment. lib. iv. cap. 7.

Tellez and le Grande, mentioning the two opinions of the father and the ſon upon this ſubject, give great praiſe to the ſon at the expence of the father, but without reaſon.

In the firſt place, we have ſeen that the utmoſt exertion Don Emanuel could make was to ſend 400 men to aſſiſt the king of Abyſſinia, whoſe country was then almoſt conquered by the Turks and Moors. It was not then from India we were to expect the execution of ſo arduous an undertaking. And as to the ſecond, the younger Albuquerque is miſtaken egregiouſly in point of fact, for there never was a canal between Coſſeir and Kenna, the goods from the Red Sea were tranſported by a caravan, and are ſo yet. We have ſeen, in the beginning of this work, the account of my travelling thither from Kenna; this intercourſe probably was often interrupted by the Arabs in the days he mentions, and ſo it is ſtill; but it is the caravan, not the canal, that is ſtopt by the Arabs, for no canal ever exiſted.

The ſum of all this ſtory is, a long and violent perſecution followed the conqueſt of Egypt by the Saracens, who were accuſtomed to live in tents, which, with their diſlike to the Chriſtian churches, made them deſtroy all the buildings of ſtone, as alſo perſecute the maſons, whom they conſidered as being employed in the advancement of idolatry: theſe unhappy workmen, therefore, fled in numbers to Lalibala, an Abyſſinian prince of their own religion, who employed them in many ſtupendous works for diverting the Nile into the Red Sea, or the Indian Ocean, which I have already deſcribed, and which exiſt entire to this day*.

---

* Vol. I. b. ii. chap. 8.

This idea, indeed, had ſubſiſted as long as the royal family lived in the ſouth part of Abyſſinia, in Shoa, in the neighbourhood, and ſometimes on the very ſpot where the attempt was made. When the court, however, removed northward, and the princes, no longer confined in Geſhen, (a mountain in Amhara) were impriſoned, as they now are, in Wechné, in Beleſſen, near Gondar, theſe tranſactions of remote times and places were gradually forgot, and often miſrepreſented; though, ſo far down as the beginning of this century, we find Tecla Haimanout I. * (king of Abyſſinia) expoſtulating by a letter with the baſha of Cairo upon the murder of the French envoy M. du Roule, and threatening the Turkiſh regency, that, if they perſiſted in ſuch miſbehaviour, he would make the Nile the inſtrument of his vengeance, the keys of which were in his hand, to give them famine or plenty, as they ſhould deſerve of him. In my time, no ſenſible man in Abyſſinia believed that ſuch a thing was poſſible, and few that it had ever been attempted.

As for the opinion of thoſe, that the Nile may be turned into the Red Sea from Nubia or Egypt, it deſerves no anſwer. What could be the motive of ſuch an undertaking? Would the Egyptians ſuffer ſuch an operation to be carried on in their own country for the ſake of ſtarving themſelves? and if the country had been taken from them by an enemy, ſtill it could not be the intereſt of that conqueror to let the inhabitants, now become his ſubjects, periſh, and much leſs to reduce them to the neceſſity of ſo doing by ſuch an undertaking.

---

* See this letter in the life of that prince.

MUCH has been wrote about a miraculous drop, or dew, called Gotta, or Nucta, which falls in Egypt preciſely on St John's day, and is believed to be the peculiar gift of that ſaint; it ſtops the plague, cauſes dough to leaven, or ferment, and announces a ſpeedy and plentiful inundation.

I HOPE my reader will not expect that I ſhould enter into the diſcuſſion of the part St John is thought to have in this event, my buſineſs is only with natural cauſes.

MEMPHIS and Alexandria, and all the ancient cities of Lower Egypt, ſtand upon ciſterns, into which the Nile, upon its overflowing, was admitted, and there remained till it had depoſited all its ſediment, and became fit for drinking. Theſe ciſterns are now full of filth; though in diſrepair, the water, when the Nile is high inſinuates itſelf into them through the broken conduits.

IN February and March the ſun is on its approach to the zenith of one extremity of Egypt, and of courſe has a very conſiderable influence upon the other. The Nile being now fallen low, the water in the ciſterns putrifies, and the river itſelf has loſt all its volatile and finer parts by the continued action of a vertical ſun; ſo that, inſtead of being ſubject to evaporation, it becomes daily more and more inclined to putrefaction. About St John's day [*] it receives a plentiful mixture of the freſh and fallen rain from Ethiopia, which dilutes and refreſhes the almoſt corrupted river, and the ſun near at hand exerts its natural influence upon the water, which now is become light enough to be exhaled, though it has ſtill with it a mixture of the corrupted fluid, ſo that it riſes but a ſmall height during the firſt few days of the inundation, then falls down and returns to the earth in plentiful and abundant dews; and that this is really ſo, I am perſuaded from what I obſerved myſelf at Cairo.

---

[*] In Abyſſinia, the 24th June.

My quadrant was placed on the flat roof, or terraſs, of a gentleman's houſe where I was taking obſervations; I had gone down to ſupper, and ſoon after returned, when I found the braſs limb of the quadrant covered with ſmall drops of dew, which were turned to a perfect green, or copperas colour; and this green had ſo corroded the braſs in an hour's time, that the marks remained on the limb of the quadrant for ſix months; and the cavities made by the corroſion were plainly diſcernible through a microſcope.

It is in February, March, or April only, that the plague begins in Egypt. I do not believe it an endemial diſeaſe, I rather think it comes from Conſtantinople with merchandiſe, or paſſengers, and at this time of the year that the air having attained a degree of putridity proper to receive it by the long abſence of dews, the infection is thereto joined, and continues to rage till the period I juſt ſpoke of, when it is ſuddenly ſtopped by the dews occaſioned by a refreſhing mixture of rain-water, which is poured out into the Nile at the beginning of the inundation.

The firſt and moſt remarkable ſign of the change brought about in the air is the ſudden ſtopping of the plague at

Saint John's day; every perſon, though ſhut up from ſociety for months before, buys, ſells, and communicates with his neighbour without any ſort of apprehenſion; and it was never known, as far as I could learn upon fair inquiry, that one fell ſick of the plague after this anniverſary: it will be obſerved I don't ſay *died*; there are, I know, examples of that, though I believe but few; the plague is not always a diſeaſe that ſuddenly terminates, it often takes a conſiderable time to come to a head, appearing only by ſymptoms; ſo that people taken ill, under the moſt putrid influence of the air, linger on, ſtruggling with the diſeaſe which has already got ſuch hold that they cannot recover; but what I ſay, and mean is, that no perſon is taken ill of the plague ſo as to die after the dew has fallen in June; and no ſymptoms of the plague are ever commonly ſeen in Egypt but in thoſe ſpring months already mentioned, the greater part of which are totally deſtitute of moiſture.

I THINK the inſtance I am going to give, which is univerſally known, and cannot be denied, brings this ſo home that no doubt can remain of the origin of this dew, and its powerful effects upon the plague.

THE Turks and Moors are known to be predeſtinarians; they believe the hour of man's death is ſo immutably fixed that nothing can either advance or defer it an inſtant. Secure in this principle, they expoſe in the market-place, immediately after Saint John's day, the clothes of the many thouſands that have died during the late continuance of the plague, all which imbibe the moiſt air of the evening and the morning, are handled, bought, put on, and worn without any apprehenſion of danger; and though theſe conſiſt of furs, cotton, ſilk, and woollen cloths, which are ſtuffs the moſt retentive of the infection, no accident happens to thoſe who wear them from this their happy confidence.

I SHALL here ſum up all that I have to ſay relating to the river Nile, with a tradition handed down to us by Herodotus, the father of ancient hiſtory, upon which moderns leſs inſtructed have grafted a number of errors. Herodotus * ſays, that he was informed by the ſecretary of Minerva's treaſury, that one half of the water of the Nile flowed due north into Egypt, while the other half took an oppoſite courſe, and flowed directly ſouth into Ethiopia.

THE ſecretary was probably of that country himſelf, and ſeems by his obſervation to have known more of it than all the ancients together. In fact, we have ſeen that, between 13° and 14° N. latitude, the Nile, with all its tributary ſtreams, which have their riſe and courſe within the tropical rains, falls down into the flat country, (the kingdom of Sennaar), which is more than a mile lower than the high country in Abyſſinia, and thence, with a little inclination, it runs into Egypt.

AGAIN, in lat. 9° in the kingdom of Gingero, the Zebeé runs ſouth, or ſouth-eaſt, into the inner Ethiopia, as do alſo many other rivers, and, as I have heard from the natives of that country, empty themſelves into a lake, as thoſe on the north of the Line do into the lake Tzana; thence diſtribute their

---

* Herod. lib. ii. p. 98. ſect. 28.

their waters to the eaſt and to the weſt. Theſe become the heads of great rivers that run through the interior countries of Ethiopia (correſponding to the ſea-coaſt of Melinda and Mombaza) into the Indian Ocean, whilſt, on the weſtward, they are the origin of the vaſt ſtreams that fall into the Atlantic, paſſing through Benin and Congo, ſouthward of the river Gambea, and the Sierraleona.

In ſhort, the periodical rains from the tropic of Capricorn to the Line, being in equal quantity with thoſe that fall between the Line and the tropic of Cancer, it is plain, that if the land of Ethiopia ſloped equally from the Line ſouthward and northward, half of the rains that fall on each ſide would go north, and half ſouth, but as the ground from 5° N. declines all ſouthward, it follows that the river which runs to the ſouthward muſt be equal to thoſe that run to the northward, *plus* the rain that falls in the 5° north latitude, where the ground begins to ſlope to the ſouthward, and there can be little doubt this is at leaſt one of the reaſons why there are in the ſouthern continent ſo many rivers larger than the Nile that run both into the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

From this very true and ſenſible relation handed to us by Herodotus, from the authority of the ſecretary of Minerva, the Nubian geographer has framed a fiction of his own, which is, that the river Nile divides itſelf into two branches, one of which runs into Egypt northward, and one through the country of the negroes weſtward, into the Atlantic Ocean. And this opinion has been greedily adopted by M. Ludolf *, who cites the authority of Leo Africanus, and that of his monk Gregory, both of them, in theſe reſpects, fully as much miſtaken as the Nubian geographer himſelf. M.Ludolf, after quoting a paſſage of Pliny, tells us that he had conſulted the famous Bochart upon that ſubject, whether the Nile and the Niger (the river that runs through Nigritia into the Weſtern Ocean) were one and the ſame river? The famous Bochart anſwers him peremptorily in the true ſpirit of a ſchoolman,—That there is nothing more certain than that the Niger is a part of the river Nile. With great ſubmiſſion, however, I muſt venture to ſay there is not the leaſt foundation for this aſſertion.

---

* Vid. Ludolf in Proemio Hiſtor. Æthiop. 1. 8. Id. lib. i. cap. viii. p. 178. Leo Africanus in deſcrip. Africa, lib. i. cap. vii.

Pliny ſeems the firſt who gave riſe to it, but he ſpeaks modeſtly upon the ſubject, giving his reaſons as he goes along. "Nigri fluvio eadem natura, quæ Nilo, calamum "& papyrum, & eaſdem gignit animantes, iiſdemque "temporibus augeſcit. *" That it has the ſame ſoil from which the Nile takes its colour, the water is the ſame in taſte, produces the ſame reeds, and eſpecially the papyrus; has the ſame animals in it, ſuch as the crocodile and hippopotamus, and overflows at the ſame ſeaſon; this is ſaying nothing but what may be applied with equal truth to every other river between the northern tropic and the Line; but the other two authors, the Nubian and the monk, aſſert each of them a direct falſehood. The Nubian ſays, that if the Nile carried all the rains that fall in Abyſſinia down into Egypt, the people would not be ſafe in their houſes. To this I anſwer by a matter of fact, the map of the whole

courſe

---

* Plin. lib. v. cap. 8.

courſe of the Nile is before the reader; and it is plain from thence, that the whole rain in Abyſſinia muſt now go, and ever has gone down into Egypt, and yet the people are very ſafe in their houſes, and very ſeldom is the whole land of Egypt compleatly overflowed: and it is by no means leſs certain from the ſame inſpection, that, unleſs a river as large as the Nile, conſtantly full, having its riſe in countries ſubject to perpetual rains, and pouring its ſtream, which never decreaſes, into that river, as the Abiad does at Halfaia, all the waters in Abyſſinia collected in the Nile would not be ſufficient to paſs its ſcanty ſtream through the burning deſerts of Nubia and the Barabra, ſo as it ſhould be of any utility when arrived in Egypt.

The next falſehood in point of fact is that of the monk Gregory, who ſays that this left branch of the Nile parts from it, after having paſſed the kingdom of Dongola into Nubia, after which it runs through Elvah, and ſo down the deſert into the Mediterranean, between the Cyrenaicum and Alexandria. Now, firſt, we know, from the authority of all antiquity, that there is not a deſert more deſtitute of rivers than that of the Thebaid. This want of water (not the diſtance) made the voyage to the temple of Jupiter Ammon an enterpriſe next to deſperate, and ſo worthy of Alexander, who never, however, met a river in his way; had there been there ſuch a ſtream, there could be no doubt that the banks of it would have been fully as well inhabited as thoſe of the Nile, and the Thebaid conſequently no deſert. Beſides the caravans, which for ages paſſed between Egypt and Sennaar, muſt have ſeen this river, and drunk of it; ſo muſt the travellers, in the beginning of this century, Poncet and M. du Roule. They were both at Elvah; and, paſſing through the dreary deſerts of Selima, they muſt have gone along its ſide, and croſſed it, where it parted from the Nile in their journey to Sennaar. Whereas we know they never ſaw running water from the time they left the Nile at Siout in Egypt, till they fell in again with it at Moſcho, during which period they had nothing but well water, which they carried in ſkins with them.

The diſtrict of Elvah is the Oaſis Magna and Oaſis Parva of the ancients; large plentiful ſprings breaking out in the middle of the burning ſands, and running conſtantly without diminution, have invited inhabitants to flock around them. Theſe conducting off the water that ſpills over the fountain by trenches, the neighbouring lands have quickly produced a plentiful vegetation: gardens and verdure are ſpread on every ſide, large groves of palm tree have been planted, and the overflowings of every fountain have produced a little paradiſe, like ſo many beautiful and fruitful iſlands amidſt an immenſe ocean.

The coaſt of the Mediterranean, from the Cyrenaicum or Ptolemaid (that is, the coaſt from Bengazi, or Derna, to Alexandria) is well known by the ſhipping of every nation; but what pilot or paſſenger ever ſaw this magnificent watering-place in that deſert coaſt, where this branch of the Nile comes down into the Mediterranean? Beſides, the author of this fable betrays his ignorance in the very beginning, where he derives this left branch of the Nile from the principal river, and ſays, that, after paſſing the kingdom of Dongola, it enters Nubia. Now, when it entered Dongola it muſt have already paſſed Nubia, for Dongola is the capital of the Barabra, every inch of which is to the northward of Nubia. I do not know worſe guides in the geography of Africa than Leo Africanus and the Nubian geographer. I believe them both impoſtors, and the commentators upon them have greatly increaſed by their own conjectures, the confuſion and errors which the text has everywhere occaſioned.

As far as I have been ever able to learn, by a very diligent and cautious inquiry, from the inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, I believe the origin of the Niger is in lat. 12° north, and in long. 30° from the meridian of Greenwich nearly; that it is compoſed of various rivers falling down the ſides of very high mountains, called Dyre and Tegla; and runs ſtraight weſt into the heart of Africa. I conclude alſo, that this river (though it has abundant ſupply from every mountain) is very much diminiſhed by evaporation, running in a long courſe upon the very limits of the tropical rains, when entire, under the name of Senega; or, perhaps, when divided under thoſe of Senega and Gambia, it loſes itſelf in the Atlantic Ocean. I conceive alſo, that, as Pliny ſays, it has the ſame taſte and natural productions with the Nile, becauſe it runs in the ſame climate, and like that river owes, if not its exiſtence, yet certainly its increaſe and fulneſs to the ſame cauſe, the tropical rains in the northern hemiſphere falling from high mountains.

I HOPE I have now fully exhauſted every ſubject worthy of inquiry as to the place where the fountains of the Nile are ſituated, alſo as to its courſe and various names, the different countries through which it flows, the true cauſe, and every thing curious attending its inundations; and that as, in old times, Caput Nili Quærere, *to ſeek the ſource of the Nile*, was a proverb in uſe to ſignify the impoſſibility of an attempt, it may hereafter be applied, with as much reaſon, to denote the inutility of any ſuch undertakings.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Kind reception among the Agows—Their Number, Trade, Character, &c.

AFTER having given my reader ſo long, though, I hope, no unentertaining lecture, it is time to go back to Woldo, whom we had left ſettling our reception with the chief of the village of Geeſh. We found the meaſures taken by this man ſuch as convinced us at once of his capacity and attachment. The miſerable Agows, aſſembled all around him, were too much intereſted in the appearance we made, not to be exceedingly inquiſitive how long our ſtay was to be among them. They ſaw, by the horſe driven before us, we belonged to Faſil, and ſuſpected, for the ſame reaſon, that they were to maintain us, or, in other words, that we ſhould live at diſcretion upon them as long as we choſe to tarry there; but Woldo, with great addreſs, had diſpelled theſe fears almoſt as ſoon as they were formed.

He informed them of the king's grant to me of the village of Geeſh; that Faſil's tyranny and avarice would end that day, and another maſter, like Negadé Ras Georgis, was come to paſs a chearful time among them, with a reſolution to pay for every labour they were ordered to perform, and purchaſe all things for ready money: he added, moreover, that no military ſervice was further to be exacted from them, either by the king or governor of Damot, nor from their preſent maſter, as he had no enemies. We found theſe news had circulated with great rapidity, and we met with a hearty welcome upon our arrival at the village.

Woldo had aſked a houſe from the Shum, who very civilly had granted me his own; it was juſt large enough to ſerve me, but we were obliged to take poſſeſſion of four or five others, and we were ſcarcely ſettled in theſe when a ſervant arrived from Faſil to intimate to the Shum his ſurrendry of the property and ſovereignty of Geeſh to me, in conſequence of a grant from the king: he brought with him a fine, large, milk-white cow, two ſheep, and two goats; the ſheep and goats I underſtood were from Welleta Yaſous. Faſil alſo ſent us ſix jars of hydromel, fifty wheat loaves of very excellent bread, and to this Welleta Yaſous had added two middle-ſized horns of excellent ſtrong ſpirits. Our hearts were now perfectly at eaſe, and we paſſed a very merry evening. Strates, above all, endeavoured, with many a bumper of the good hydromel of Buré, to ſubdue the devil which he had ſwallowed in the inchanted water. Woldo, who had done his part to great perfection, and had reconciled the minds of all the people of the village to us, had a little apprehenſion for himſelf; he thought he had loſt credit with me, and therefore employed the ſervant of

Ayto Aylo to deſire me not to ſpeak of the ſaſh to Faſil's ſervant. I aſſured him, that, as long as I ſaw him acting properly, as he now did, it was much more probable I ſhould give him another ſaſh on our return, than complain of the means he had uſed to get this laſt. This entirely removed all his fears, and indeed as long after as he was with us, he every day deſerved more and more our commendations.

Before we went to bed I ſatisfied Faſil's ſervant, who had orders from Welleta Yaſous to return immediately; and, as he ſaw we did not ſpare the liquor that he brought us, he promiſed to ſend a freſh ſupply as ſoon as he returned home, which he did not fail to perform the day after.

Woldo was now perfectly happy; he had no ſuperior or ſpy over his actions; he had explained himſelf to the Shum, that we ſhould want ſomebody to buy neceſſaries to make bread for us, and to take care of the management of our houſe. We diſplayed our leſſer articles for barter to the Shum, and told him the moſt conſiderable purchaſes, ſuch as oxen and ſheep, were to be paid in gold. He was ſtruck with the appearance of our wealth, and the generoſity of our propoſals, and told Woldo that he inſiſted, ſince we were in his houſes, we would take his daughters for our houſe-keepers. The propoſal was a moſt reaſonable one, and readily accepted. He accordingly ſent for three in an inſtant, and we delivered them their charge. The eldeſt took it upon her readily, ſhe was about ſixteen years of age, of a ſtature above the middle ſize, but ſhe was remarkably genteel, and, colour apart, her features would have made her a beauty in any country in Europe; ſhe was, beſides, very ſprightly; we underſtood not one word of her language, though ſhe comprehended very eaſily the ſigns that we made. This nymph of the Nile was called by nickname Irepone, which ſignifies ſome animal that deſtroys mice, but whether of the ferret or ſnake kind I could not perfectly underſtand; ſometimes it was one and ſometimes another, but which it was I thought of no great importance.

The firſt and ſecond day, after diſpoſing of ſome of our ſtock in purchaſes, ſhe thought herſelf obliged to render us an account, and give back the reſidue at night to Woldo, with a proteſtation that ſhe had not ſtolen or kept any thing to herſelf. I looked upon this regular accounting as an ungenerous treatment of our benefactreſs. I called on Woldo, and made him produce a parcel that contained the ſame with the firſt commodities we had given her; this conſiſted of beads, antimony, ſmall ſciſſars, knives, and large needles; I then brought out a pacquet of the ſame that had not been broken, and told her they were intended to be diſtributed among her friends, and that we expected no account from her; on the contrary, that, after ſhe had beſtowed theſe, to buy us neceſſaries, and for any purpoſes ſhe pleaſed, I had ſtill as many more to leave her at parting, for the trouble ſhe had given herſelf. I often thought the head of the little ſavage would have turned with the poſſeſſion of ſo much riches, and ſo great confidence, and it was impoſſible to be ſo blinded, as not to ſee that I had already made great progreſs in her affections. To the number of trifles I had added one ounce of gold, value about fifty ſhillings ſterling, which I thought would defray our expences all the time we ſtaid; and having now perfectly arranged the œconomy of our family, nothing remained but to make the proper obſervations.

THE houſes are all of clay and ſtraw. There was no place for fixing my clock; I was therefore obliged to employ a very excellent watch made for me by Elicott. The dawn now began, and a few minutes afterwards every body was at their doors; all of them crowded to ſee us, and we breakfaſted in public with very great chearfulneſs. The white cow was killed, and every one invited to his ſhare of her. The Shum, prieſt of the river, ſhould likewiſe have been of the party, but he declined either ſitting or eating with us, though his ſons were not ſo ſcrupulous.

IT is upon the principal fountain and altar, already mentioned, that once a-year, on the firſt appearance of the dog-ſtar, (or, as others ſay, eleven days after) this prieſt aſſembles the heads of the clans; and having ſacrificed a black heifer that never bore a calf, they plunge the head of it into this fountain, they then wrap it up in its own hide, ſo as no more to be ſeen, after having ſprinkled the hide within and without with water from the fountain. The carcaſe is then ſplit in half, and cleaned with extraordinary care; and, thus prepared, it is laid upon the hillock over the firſt fountain, and waſhed all over with its water, while the elders, or conſiderable people, carry water in their hands joined (it muſt not be in any diſh) from the two other fountains; they then aſſemble upon the ſmall hill a little weſt of St Michael, (it uſed to be the place where the church now ſtands) there they divide the carcaſe into pieces correſponding to the number of the tribes, and each tribe has its privilege, or pretenſions, to particular parts, which are not in proportion to the preſent conſequence of the ſeveral clans. Geeſh has a principal ſlice, though the moſt inconſiderable territory of the whole; Sacala has the next; and Zeegam, the moſt conſiderable of them all in power and riches, has the leaſt of the whole. I found it in vain to aſk upon what rules this diſtribution was founded; their general and conſtant anſwer was, It was ſo obſerved in old times.

After having ate this carcaſe raw, according to their cuſtom, and drunk the Nile water to the excluſion of any other liquor, they pile up the bones on the place where they ſit, and burn them to aſhes. This uſed to be performed where the church now ſtands; but Ras Sela Chriſtos, ſome time after, having beaten the Agows, and deſirous, at the Jeſuits inſtigation, to convert them to Chriſtianity, he demoliſhed their altar where the bones were burnt, and built a church upon the ſite, the doors of which, I believe, were never opened ſince that reign, nor is there now, as far as we could perceive, any Chriſtian there who might wiſh to ſee it frequented. After Sela Chriſtos had demoliſhed their altar by building this church, they ate the carcaſe, and burnt the bones, on the top of the mountain of Geeſh out of the way of profanation, where the veſtiges of this ceremony may yet be ſeen; but probably the fatigue attending this, and the great indifference their late governors have had for Chriſtianity, have brought them back to a ſmall hillock by the ſide of the marſh, weſt of ſaint Michael's church, and a little to the ſouthward, where they perform this ſolemnity every year, and they will probably reſume their firſt altar when the church is fallen to ruins, which they are every day privately haſtening.

After they have finiſhed their bloody banquet, they carry the head, cloſe wrapt from ſight in the hide, into the cavern, which they ſay reaches below the fountains, and there, by a common light, without torches, or a number of candles, as denoting a ſolemnity, they perform their worſhip, the particulars of which I never could learn; it is a piece of free-maſonry, which every body knows, and no body ventures to reveal. At a certain time of the night they leave the cave, but at what time, or by what rule, I could not learn; neither would they tell me what became of the head, whether it was ate, or buried, or how conſumed. The Abyſſinians have a ſtory, probably created by themſelves, that the devil appears to them, and with him they eat the head, ſwearing obedience to him upon certain conditions, that of ſending rain, and a good ſeaſon for their bees and cattle: however this may be, it is certain that they pray to the ſpirit reſiding in the river, whom they call the Everlaſting God, Light of the World, Eye of the World, God of Peace, their Saviour, and Father of the Univerſe.

Our landlord, the Shum, made no ſcruple of reciting his prayers for ſeaſonable rain, for plenty of graſs, for the preſervation of ſerpents, at leaſt of one kind of this reptile; he alſo deprecated thunder in theſe prayers, which he pronounced very pathetically with a kind of tone or ſong; he called the river "Moſt High God, Saviour of the World;" of the other words I could not well judge, but by the interpretation of Woldo. Thoſe titles, however, of divinity which he gave the river, I could perfectly comprehend without an interpreter, and for theſe only I am a voucher.

I ASKED the prieſt, into whoſe good graces I had purpoſely inſinuated myſelf, if ever any ſpirit had been ſeen by him? He anſwered, without heſitation, Yes; very frequently. He ſaid he had ſeen the ſpirit the evening of the 3d, (juſt as the ſun was ſetting) under a tree, which he ſhewed me at a diſtance, who told him of the death of a ſon, and alſo that a party from Faſil's army was coming; that, being afraid, he conſulted his ſerpent, who ate readily and heartily, from which he knew no harm was to befal him from us. I aſked him if he could prevail on the ſpirit to appear to me? He ſaid he could not venture to make this requeſt. If he thought he would appear to me, if, in the evening, I ſat under that tree alone? he ſaid he believed not. He ſaid he was of a very graceful figure and appearance; he thought rather older than middle age; but he ſeldom choſe to look at his face; he had a long white beard, his cloaths not like theirs, of leather, but like ſilk, of the faſhion of the country. I aſked him how he was certain it was not a man? he laughed, or rather ſneered, ſhaking his head, and ſaying, No, no, it is no man, but a ſpirit. I aſked him then what ſpirit he thought it was? he ſaid it was *of the river*, it was God, the Father of mankind; but I never could bring him to be more explicit. I then deſired to know why he prayed againſt thunder. He ſaid, becauſe it was hurtful to the bees, their great revenue being honey and wax: then, why he prayed for ſerpents? he replied, Becauſe they taught him the coming of good or evil. It ſeems they have all ſeveral of theſe creatures in their neighbourhood, and the richer ſort always in their houſes, whom they take care of, and feed before they undertake a journey, or any affair of conſequence. They take this animal from his hole, and put butter and milk before him, of which he is ex-

extravagantly fond; if he does not eat, ill-fortune is near at hand.

NANNA GEORGIS, chief of the Agows of Banja, a man of the greateſt conſideration at Gondar, both with the king and Ras Michael, and my particular friend, as I had kept him in my houſe, and attended him in his ſickneſs, after the campaign of 1769, confeſſed to me his apprehenſions that he ſhould die, becauſe the ſerpent did not eat upon his leaving his houſe to come to Gondar. He was, indeed, very ill of the low country fever, and very much alarmed; but he recovered, and returned home, by Ras Michael's order, to gather the Agows together againſt Waragna Faſil; which he did, and ſoon after, he and other ſeven chiefs of the Agows were ſlain at the battle of Banja; ſo here the ſerpent's warning was verified by a ſecond trial, though it failed in the firſt.

BEFORE an invaſion of the Galla, or an inroad of the enemy, they ſay theſe ſerpents diſappear, and are nowhere to be found. Faſil, the ſagacious and cunning governor of the country, was, as it was ſaid, greatly addicted to this ſpecies of divination, in ſo much as never to mount his horſe, or go from home, if an animal of this kind, which he had in his keeping, refuſed to eat.

THE Shum's name was Keſla Abay, or Servant of the river; he was a man about ſeventy, not very lean, but infirm, fully as much ſo as might have been expected from that age. He conceived that he might have had eighty-four or eighty-five children. That honourable charge which he poſſeſſed had been in his family from the beginning of the world, as he imagined. Indeed, if all his predeceſſors had as numerous families as he, there was no probability of the ſucceſſion devolving to ſtrangers. He had a long white beard, and very moderately thick; an ornament rare in Abyſſinia, where they have ſeldom any hair upon their chin. He had round his body a ſkin wrapt and tied with a broad belt: I ſhould rather ſay it was an ox's hide; but it was ſo ſcraped, and rubbed, and manufactured, that it was of the conſiſtence and appearance of ſhamoy, only browner in colour. Above this he wore a cloak with the hood up, and covering his head; he was, bare-legged, but had ſandals, much like thoſe upon ancient ſtatues; theſe, however, he put off as ſoon as ever he approached the bog where the Nile riſes, which we were all likewiſe obliged to do. We were allowed to drink the water, but make no other uſe of it. None of the inhabitants of Geeſh waſh themſelves, or their cloaths, in the Nile, but in a ſtream that falls from the mountain of Geeſh down into the plain of Aſſoa, which runs ſouth, and meets the Nile in its turn northward, paſſing the country of the Gafats and Gongas.

The Agows, in whoſe country the Nile riſes, are, in point of number, one of the moſt conſiderable nations in Abyſſinia; when their whole force is raiſed, which ſeldom happens, they can bring to the field 4000 horſe, and a great number of foot; they were, however, once much more powerful; ſeveral unſucceſsful battles, and the perpetual inroads of the Galla, have much diminiſhed their ſtrength. The country, indeed, is ſtill full of inhabitants, but from their hiſtory we learn, that one clan, called Zeegam, maintained ſingly a war againſt the king himſelf, from the time of Socinios to that of Yaſous the Great, who, after all, overcame them by ſurpriſe and ſtratagem; and that another clan, the Denguis, in like manner maintained the war againſt Facilidas, Hannes I. and Yaſous II. all of them active princes. Their riches, however, are ſtill greater than their power, for though their province in length is no where 60 miles, nor half that in breadth, yet Gondar and all the neighbouring country depend for the neceſſaries of life, cattle, honey, butter, wheat, hides, wax, and a number of ſuch articles, upon the Agows, who come conſtantly in ſucceſſion, a thouſand and fifteen hundred at a time, loaded with theſe commodities, to the capital.

As the dependence upon the Agows is for their produce rather than on the forces of their country, it has been a maxim with wiſe princes to compound with them for an additional tribute, inſtead of their military ſervice; the neceſſities of the times have ſometimes altered theſe wiſe regulations, and between their attachment to Faſil, and afterwards to Ras Michael, they have been very much reduced, whereby the ſtate hath ſuffered.

It will naturally occur, that, in a long carriage, ſuch as that of a hundred miles in ſuch a climate, butter muſt melt, and be in a ſtate of fuſion, conſequently very near putrefaction; this is prevented by the root of an herb, called Moc-moco, yellow in colour, and in ſhape nearly reſembling a carrot; this they bruiſe and mix with their butter, and a very ſmall quantity preſerves it freſh for a conſiderable time; and this is a great ſaving and convenience, for, ſuppoſing ſalt was employed, it is very doubtful if it would anſwer the intention; beſides, ſalt is a money in this country,

try, being circulated in the form of wedges, or bricks; it ſerves the purpoſe of ſilver coin, and is the change of gold; ſo that this herb is of the utmoſt uſe in preventing the increaſe in price of this neceſſary article, which is the principal food of all ranks of people in this country. Brides paint their feet likewiſe from the ancle downwards, as alſo their nails and palms of their hands, with this drug. I brought with me into Europe a large quantity of the ſeed reſembling that of coriander, and diſperſed it plentifully through all the royal gardens: whether it has ſucceeded or not I cannot ſay.

Besides the market of Gondar, the neighbouring black ſavages, the woolly-headed Shangalla, purchaſe the greateſt part of theſe commodities from them, and many others, which they bring from the capital when they return thence; they receive in exchange elephants teeth, rhinoceros horns, gold in ſmall pellets, and a quantity of very fine cotton; of which goods they might receive a much greater quantity were they content to cultivate trade in a fair way, without making inroads upon theſe ſavages for the ſake of ſlaves, and thereby diſturbing them in their occupations of ſeeking for gold and hunting the elephant.

The way this trade, though very much limited, is eſtabliſhed, is by two nations ſending their children mutually to each other; there is then peace between thoſe two families which have ſuch hoſtages; theſe children often intermarry; after which that family is underſtood to be protected, and at peace, perhaps, for a generation: but ſuch inſtances are rare, the natural propenſity of both nations being to theft and plunder; into theſe they always relapſe; mutual enmity follows in conſequence.

The country of the Agows, called Agow Midrè, from its elevation, muſt be of courſe temperate and wholeſome; the days, indeed, are hot, even at Sacala, and, when expoſed to the ſun, we are ſenſible of a ſcorching heat; but whenever you are ſeated in the ſhade, or in a houſe, the temperature is cool, as there is a conſtant breeze which makes the ſun tolerable even at mid-day, though we are here but 10° from the Line, or a few minutes more.

Though theſe Agows are ſo fortunate in their climate, they are not ſaid to be long-livers; but their preciſe age is very difficult to aſcertain to any degree of exactneſs, as they have no fixed or known epoch to refer to; and, though their country abounds with all the neceſſaries of life, their taxes, tributes, and ſervices, eſpecially at preſent, are ſo multiplied upon them, whilſt their diſtreſſes of late have been ſo great and frequent, that they are only the manufacturers of the commodities they ſell, to ſatisfy theſe conſtant exorbitant demands, and cannot enjoy any part of their own produce themſelves, but live in miſery and penury ſcarce to be conceived. We ſaw a number of women, wrinkled and ſun-burnt ſo as ſcarce to appear human, wandering about under a burning ſun, with one and ſometimes two children upon their back, gathering the ſeeds of bent graſs to make a kind of bread.

The cloathing of the Agows is all of hides, which they ſoften and manufacture in a method peculiar to themſelves, and this they wear in the rainy ſeaſon, when the weather is cold, for here the rainy ſeaſons are of long duration, and violent, which ſtill increaſes the nearer you approach the Line, for the reaſons I have already aſſigned. The younger ſort are chiefly naked, the married women carrying their children about with them upon their backs; their cloathing is like a ſhirt down to their feet, and girded with a belt or girdle about their middle; the lower part of it reſembles a large double petticoat, one ply of which they turn back over their ſhoulders, faſtening it with a broach, or ſkewer, acroſs their breaſt before, and carry their children in it behind. The women are generally thin, and, like the men, below the middle ſize. There is no ſuch thing as barrenneſs known among them. They begin to bear children before eleven; they marry generally about that age, and are marriageable two years before: they cloſe child-bearing before they are thirty, though there are ſeveral inſtances to the contrary.

Dengui, Sacala, Dengla, and Geeſh, are all called by the name of Ancaſha, and their tribute is paid in honey. Quaquera and Azena pay honey likewiſe; Banja, honey and gold; Metakel, gold; Zeegam, gold. There comes from Dengla a particular kind of ſheep, called Macoot, which are ſaid to be of a breed brought from the ſouthward of the Line; but neither ſheep, butter, nor ſlaves make part of their tribute, being reſerved for preſents to the king and great men.

Besides what they ſell, and what they pay to the governor of Damot, the Agows have a particular tribute which they preſent to the king, one thouſand dabra of honey, each dabra containing about ſixty pounds weight, being a large earthen veſſel. They pay, moreover, fifteen hundred oxen and 1000 ounces of gold: formerly the number of jars of honey was four thouſand, but ſeveral of theſe villages being daily given to private people by the king, the quantity is diminiſhed by the quota ſo alienated. The butter is all ſold; and, ſince the fatal battle of Banja, the king's ſhare comes only to about one thouſand jars. The officer that keeps the accounts, and ſees the rents paid, is called Agow Miziker*; his poſt is worth one thouſand ounces of gold; and by this it may be judged with what œconomy this revenue is collected. This poſt is generally the next to the governor of Damot, but not of courſe; they are ſeparate provinces, and united only by the ſpecial grant of the king.

Although I had with me two large tents ſufficient for my people, I was adviſed to take poſſeſſion of the houſes to ſecure our mules and horſes from thieves in the night, as alſo from the aſſaults of wild beaſts, of which this country is full. Almoſt every ſmall collection of houſes has behind it a large cave, or ſubterraneous dwelling, dug in the rock, of a prodigious capacity, and which muſt have been the work of great labour. It is not poſſible, at this diſtance of time, to ſay whether theſe caverns were the ancient habitation of the Agows when they were Troglodytes, or whether they were intended for retreats upon any alarm of an irruption of the Galla into their country.

---

* Accountant of the Agows.

At the ſame time I muſt obſerve, that all the clans, or diſtricts of the Agows, have the whole mountains of their country perforated in caves like theſe; even the clans of Zeegam and Quaquera, the firſt of which, from its power ariſing from the populous ſtate of the country, and the number of horſes it breeds, ſeems to have no reaſon to fear the irregular invaſions of naked and ill-armed ſavages ſuch as are the Galla. The country of Zeegam, however, which has but few mountains, hath many of theſe caverns, one range above another, in every mountain belonging to them. Quaquera, indeed, borders upon the Shangalla; as theſe are all foot, perfectly contiguous, and ſeparated by the river, the caverns were probably intended as retreats for cattle and women againſt the attacks of thoſe barbarians, which were every minute to be apprehended.

In the country of the Tcheratz Agow, the mountains are all excavated like theſe in Damot, although they have no Galla for their neighbours whoſe invaſions they need be afraid of. Lalibala, indeed, their great king and ſaint, about the twelfth century, converted many of theſe caves into churches, as if he had conſidered them as formerly the receptacles of Pagan ſuperſtition. At the ſame time, it is not improbable that theſe caverns were made uſe of for religious purpoſes; that of Geeſh, for inſtance, was probably, in former times, a place of ſecret worſhip paid to the river, becauſe of that uſe it ſtill is, not only to the inhabitants of the village, but to the aſſembly of the clans in general, who, after the ceremonies I have already ſpoken of, retire, and then perform their ſacred ceremonies, to which none but the heads of families in the Agows country are ever admitted.

When I ſhewed our landlord, Keſla Abay, the dog-ſtar, (Syrius) he knew it perfectly, ſaying it was Seir, it was the ſtar of the river, the meſſenger or ſtar of the convocation of the tribes, or of the feaſt; but I could not obſerve he ever prayed to it, or looked at it otherwiſe than one does to a dial, nor mentioned it with the reſpect he did the Abay; nor did he ſhew any ſort of attention to the planets, or to any other ſtar whatever.

On the 9th of November, having finiſhed my memorandum relating to theſe remarkable places, I traced again on foot the whole courſe of this river from its ſource to the plain of Goutto. I was unattended by any one, having with me only two hunting dogs, and my gun in my hand. The quantity of game of all ſorts, eſpecially the deer kind, was, indeed, ſurpriſing; but though I was, as uſual, a very ſucceſsful ſportſman, I was obliged, for want of help, to leave each deer where he fell. They ſleep in the wild oats, and do not riſe till you are about to tread upon them, and then ſtare at you for half a minute before they attempt to run off.

The only mention I ſhall make of the natural productions of this place comes the more properly in here, as it relates to my account of the religion of this people. In the writings of the Jeſuits, the Agows are ſaid to worſhip *canes**;

---

* See a very remarkable letter of Ras Sela Chriſtos to the emperor Socinios, in Balthazar Tellez, tom. 2. p. 496.

but of this I could find no traces among them. I ſaw no plant of this kind in their whole country, excepting ſome large bamboo-trees. This plant, in the Agows language, is called Krihaha. It grows in great quantity upon the ſides of the precipice of Geeſh, and helps to conceal the cavern we have already mentioned; but though we cut ſeveral pieces of theſe canes, they ſhewed no ſort of emotion, nor to be the leaſt intereſted in what we were doing.

Our buſineſs being now done, nothing remained but to depart. We had paſſed our time in perfect harmony; the addreſs of Woldo, and the great attachment of our friend Irepone, had kept our houſe in a chearful abundance. We had lived, it is true, too magnificently for philoſophers, but neither idly nor riotouſly; and I believe never will any *ſovereign* of Geeſh be again ſo popular, or reign over his ſubjects with greater mildneſs. I had practiſed medicine gratis, and killed, for three days ſucceſſively, a cow each day for the poor and the neighbours. I had cloathed the high prieſt of the Nile from head to foot, as alſo his two ſons, and had decorated two of his daughters with beads of all the colours of the rainbow, adding every other little preſent they ſeemed fond of, or that we thought would be agreeable. As for our amiable Irepone, we had reſerved for her the choiceſt of our preſents, the moſt valuable of every article we had with us, and a large proportion of every one of them; we gave her, beſides, ſome gold; but ſhe, more generous and nobler in her ſentiments than us, ſeemed to pay little attention to theſe that announced to her the ſeparation from her friend; ſhe tore her fine hair, which ſhe had every day before braided in a newer and more graceful manner; ſhe threw herſelf upon the ground in the houſe, and refuſed to ſee us mount on horſeback, or take our leave, and came not to the door till we were already ſet out, then followed us with her good wiſhes and her eyes as far as ſhe could ſee or be heard.

I TOOK my leave of Keſla Abay, the venerable prieſt of the moſt famous river in the world, who recommended me with great earneſtneſs to the care of his god, which, as Strates humorouſly enough obſerved, meant nothing leſs than he hoped the devil would take me. All the young men in the village, with lances and ſhields, attended us to Saint Michael Sacala, that is, to the borders of their country, and end of my little ſovereignty.

GR III BRITISH MUSEUM

REGISTER

OF THE

QUANTITY OF RAIN-WATER,

IN INCHES AND DECIMALS,

WHICH FELL AT GONDAR, IN ABYSSINIA, IN THE YEAR 1770,

THROUGH A FUNNEL OF ONE FOOT ENGLISH IN DIAMETER.

	INCHES.
The rain began this year on the firſt of March: there fell in ſhowers, that laſted only a few minutes, between the 1ſt of March and the laſt of April, - -	.039

MAY.

1.	FROM the 1ſt to the 6th, - -	.039
	From the 6th to the 8th, - -	.120
	From the 10th to the 12th it rained chiefly in the night,	.711
	From the 12th to the 14th, - - - -	.123
19.	At four in the afternoon a ſmall ſhower, but heavy rain in the night, - - - -	.526
21.	At 7 o'clock in the evening a ſmall ſhower, which continued moderately through the night, -	.171
27.	At 6 in the evening heavy rain for an hour, -	.540

MAY.		INCHES.
29.	At 3 in the afternoon frequent ſhowers of light rain. It continued one hour 30 minutes, - -	.487
	Total rain in May,	2.717

JUNE.

1.	At 12 noon, light rain for 15 minutes,	.028
2.	Between 12 o'clock night it has rained 30 minutes, in ſmall ſhowers, which laſted 5 or 6 minutes at a time,	.049
4.	At 8 in the morning ſlight ſhowers for 30 minutes,	.014
5.	Between 6 and 10 in the morning four ſmall ſhowers, that laſted 32 minutes, and at 12 a very gentle rain that laſted 15 minutes, - -	.031
10.	It has rained very violently for 6 hours 30 minutes,	.342
11.	Between 2 and 6 in the afternoon, at three ſeveral times, it has rained 20 minutes, - -	.014
12.	At noon a violent rain for one hour 30 minutes. At half paſt 1 in the afternoon light rain for an hour. At 4 afternoon, light rain for 30 minutes. At half paſt ſix ſame afternoon, a very gentle rain for 3 hours,	.421
13.	Between 4 and 5 afternoon it rained twice for 15 minutes, but not perceptible in the recipient, -	—
16.	Between 2 and 6 afternoon it has rained three times ſmart ſhowers, in all about 20 minutes, -	.033
17.	There fell in the night ſmall rain for an hour, -	.002
18.	At 1 afternoon there was a ſtrong ſhower for 15 minutes. At half paſt 1 another for 45 minutes. Same day at 6 afternoon, it rained at intervals for 2 hours, - - -	.750
19.	At half after 2 afternoon it began to rain violently with intervals. At night a ſlight ſhower for 20 minutes,	.118
20.	At twelve noon there was a very ſlight ſhower for 6 minutes. At half paſt 5, ſame day, a ſmall ſhower that laſted 30 minutes. At 8 o'clock evening it began to rain ſmartly at intervals for 4 hours, -	.171
21.	At a quarter paſt 11 it rained violently with thunder and lightning for about 2 hours. At half paſt 4 in the	

JUNE.		INCHES.
	evening it rained, with intervals, in all about 45 minutes,	.330
22.	At half paſt 12 noon, it rained an hour,	.175
23.	At one o'clock afternoon ſlight ſhowers for 2 hours. Heavy rain in the night for 4 hours,	.358
25.	At a quarter paſt one afternoon, a ſmall ſhower, which laſted one hour 35 minutes. At night it rained one hour 30 minutes; heavy rain with thunder and lightning,	.552
26.	At two in the afternoon, violent rain with intervals for 30 minutes. At half paſt five it rained for 30 minutes; and the beginning of the night for three hours,	.233
27.	At a quarter paſt twelve, a ſmall ſhower for one hour 45 minutes, and at night a moderate ſhower,	.302
28.	At half paſt twelve, a gentle rain. At 50 minutes after twelve, violent. At two in the afternoon very gentle rain for 15 minutes; and at 7, moderate rain for one hour and 30 minutes,	.290
29.	At 1 in the afternoon, light rain, but a heavy rain muſt have fallen ſomewhere elſe, as the river Kahha is overflowed,	.092
30.	At noon a very gentle rain for 15 minutes,	.002
	Total rain in June,	4.307

JULY.

1.	At 20 minutes paſt eleven, ſtrong rain for 30 minutes, with ſome ſhowers through the night,	.306
2.	At half paſt eleven, a ſmall ſhower for 30 minutes, and then, at twelve, a violent ſhower, wind ſouth-weſt, for 45 minutes,	.792
3.	It rained at four in the afternoon, and in the night,	.311
4.	It rained from twelve to two, and in the night likewiſe,	.390
5.	It rained at noon, and ſome in the night,	.029
7.	It rained and hailed violently. It rained in the night likewiſe,	1.686
8.	Light rain in the night,	.038

JULY.		INCHES.
9.	Light rain for a few minutes, and no more all day; but the river Kahha has ſuddenly overflowed, and there is appearance of rain on the Mountain of the Sun,	.017
10.	No rain,	—
11.	Ditto,	—
12.	At half an hour paſt noon it rained violently,	.422
13.	Violent rain at mid-day, and alſo in the night	1.185
14.	A few light ſhowers night and day,	.054
15.	A ſmall ſhower in the evening, and another in the night,	.251
16.	No rain,	—
17.	A ſmall ſhower at one in the afternoon, and flying ſhowers throughout the day. It rained at ten at night violently,	.658
18.	A gentle ſhower at noon, but continued raining in the night,	.463
19.	Light ſhowers all the night,	.237
20.	It rained all night till eight o'clock next morning,	.714
21.	Light ſhowers in the afternoon, but violent rain in the night,	1.329
22.	Light ſhowers in the evening,	.174
23.	It rained one ſhower at half paſt ten in the morning,	.107
24.	Light ſhowers night and day,	.226
25.	Light rains and frequent,	.015
26.	Light ſhowers throughout the evening,	.081
27.	Light rains,	.148
28.	Flying ſhowers,	.070
29.	Ditto,	.081
30.	Light ſhowers,	.013
31.	Flying light ſhowers night and day,	.292
	Total rain in July,	10.089

AUGUST.

1.	Light rain in the afternoon,	.056
2.	It rained in the night ſmartly,	.329
3.	It rained at noon violently,	1.318
4.	It rained from mid-day to evening, and ſome ſhowers in the night,	1.723

AUGUST.		INCHES.
5.	At 2 in the afternoon it began to rain violently for 2 hours,	1.042
6.	Smart ſhowers at different times in the evening and night,	.490
7.	It rained in the night,	.580
8.	Light rain in the night,	.053
9.	Flying ſhowers through the day, but for 6 minutes. Evening very violent,	.186
10.	Smart ſhowers in the evening and night,	.342
11. & 12.	Frequent ſhowers, with a high wind,	1.184
13. & 14.	Light rain the firſt day, but violent on the ſecond,	1.423
15.	Fair all day, but rained at night,	.475
16.	Flying ſhowers night and day,	.144
17.	A very violent ſhower of ſhort duration,	.371
18. & 19.	Several ſmall ſhowers,	.609
20. & 21.	Frequent light ſhowers,	.236
22. & 23.	Conſtant rain,	1.502
24.	Frequent ſhowers in the evening,	.306
25. & 26.	Conſtant rain,	1.763
27.	Frequent ſhowers,	.289
28.	Ditto,	.280
29.	It rained in the night,	.355
30.	Ditto,	.302
31.	Ditto,	.211
	Total rain in Auguſt,	15.569

SEPTEMBER.

1.	It rained in the night,	.079
2.	Ditto,	.107
3. & 4.	Frequent ſhowers night and day,	.358
5. & 6.	Ditto,	.568
7.	It rained in the night only,	.213
8.	No rain,	—
9.	It rained violently for a few minutes at 8 in the Evening,	.055
10.	No rain,	—
11.	It rained in the night only,	.227
12.	It rained ſmartly in the night,	.566

13. No

SEPT.		INCHES.
13.	No rain,	—
14.	Light ſhowers in the day,	.042
15.	Frequent ſhowers night and day,	.159
16.	It rained a little in the night,	.132
18.	No rain,	—
19.	Ditto,	—
20.	Flying ſhowers night and day,	.263
21.	No rain,	—
22.	Ditto,	—
23.	Some rain in the night,	.039
24.	Ditto,	.026
25.	The rain ceaſed,	—
	Total rain in September,	2.834

N. B. This is the feſtival of the Croſs in Egypt, when the inundation begins to abate. It rains no more in Abyſſinia till towards the beginning of November, and then only for a few days; but theſe are the rains Abyſſinia cannot want for their latter crops, and it was for theſe the Agows prayed when we were at the fountains of the Nile the 5th of November 1770.

STATE

OF THE

QUANTITY OF RAIN-WATER,

WHICH FELL IN ABYSSINIA AT KOSCAM, THE QUEEN'S PALACE,

IN 1771, DURING THE RAINY MONTHS,

THROUGH A FUNNEL OF ONE FOOT ENGLISH IN DIAMETER, AS IN THE PRECEDING YEAR 1770.

FEBRUARY.

		INCHES.
23.	THIS day it rained, for the firſt time, from a quarter before four o'clock afternoon to half paſt four ditto, - -	.003
28.	It rained in the night one hour and a quarter,	.001

MARCH.

4.	It rained in the night near two hours ſmall rain,	.042
7.	It rained a ſmall ſhower in the evening,	.014
12.	It rained three quarters of an hour this afternoon,	.017
24.	It rained and hailed violently for 18 minutes in the night, - -	.017

29. It

MARCH.		INCHES.
29.	It rained an hour ahd a half in the afternoon,	.066
30.	It rained hard in the night, -	.504
	Total rain in February and March,	.664

APRIL.

3.	It rained, or rather hailed, nine minutes,	—
5.	It rained an hour in the afternoon, -	.067
8.	Small rain at intervals throughout the afternoon,	.002
10.	It rained an hour in the night, -	.003
30.	It rained one hour and a quarter in the night,	.013
	Total rain in April,	.085

MAY.

1.	From the 31ſt ult. to this day, at different times,	.330
3.	It rained hard in the night, - -	.355
6.	It has rained violently ſince three in the afternoon, wind S. E. variable, - -	.095
7.	It has rained heavily in the night, wind varying from N. to S. and S. W. -	.368
8.	It rained ſmall rain in the afternoon,	.042
11.	It has rained ſmall rain this afternoon, wind N. W.	.002
14.	It has rained ſince yeſterday at three all night, and till noon to-day, - -	.675
27.	From yeſterday at two P. M. it rained to half paſt ſix, and heavily moſt part of the night, wind varying from N. to S. - -	.634
	Total rain in May,	2.501

J U N E.

		INCHES.
1.	From yeſterday at noon, in the night, and this day, wind W. S. W. - -	.212
3.	At night, ſouth, - -	.002
5.	It rained in the night, S. W. - -	.223
6.	Ditto, - - -	.006
9.	It rained in the night and afternoon, wind W. by S.	.725
10.	Ditto, - -	.463
11.	It rained in the night, - -	.343
13.	It rained from the 12th, at noon, to the 13th at ten, S. S. W. - -	1.265
14.	It rained from three till ſeven, -	.120
15.	It rained laſt night from ſun-ſet till midnight, S.	.160
	N. B. The 16th at night, is the day the Egyptians ſay the Nile ferments, and is troubled, by falling of the nucta.	
18.	After three days fair, wind freſh, N. it began to rain yeſterday, and rained three quarters of an hour, wind varying from north to weſt,	.490
19.	It rained with intervals from four to ten laſt night, wind north, varying by eaſt to ſouth, and ſouth-weſt, where it fell calm, and rained violently, - -	.530
20.	It rained from a quarter before ſix, till ten at night, wind at north, freſh; changed to eaſt, then to ſouth, and there fell calm; violent thunder and lightning, - -	.635
21.	It began to rain yeſterday at three, and rained till near five; wind changed from north to ſouth, and fell calm; cleared with wind at north,	.550
22.	It began to rain at three, and rained till five; wind changed from north to eaſt, then to ſouth, and fell calm; cleared with wind at north; fair all night, - -	.149
25.	It has been fair till yeſterday evening: at three it	

JUNE.		INCHES.
	began raining, and rained till five this morning, a few drops; wind north, -	.067
26.	It rained ſmall rain at ſeveral times yeſterday afternoon, and a few drops this morning, wind N. calm; at ten it came to ſouth and then to weſt,	.120
27.	It rained yeſterday afternoon from four to five; wind changed from north to weſt, but ſpeedily returned to north, freſh, -	.054
28. & 29.	It rained the 27th in the afternoon and in the night, wind at north. Yeſterday it rained ſmall rain all day till five, and cleared in the night, with wind at north, - -	.268
	Total rain in June,	6.388

JULY.

1.	There fell ſmall ſhowers the night of the 29th and of the 30th, - -	.093
3.	There fell a ſmall ſhower the ſecond in the afternoon, and laſt night hard, -	.267
4.	It rained ſmall rain at noon. From two, and all night, heavy and conſtant rain. It thundered from noon till three, - -	.373
5.	It rained all yeſterday afternoon, and by intervals, till nine at night. Small rain this morning; calm; W. S. W. and S. W. -	.423
6.	It rained yeſterday afternoon and in the night; S. W. - - -	.489

N. B. The 6th of July is the firſt of the month Hamlie, and of the Egyptian month Abib. It is this day they firſt begin to cry the Nile's increaſe in the ſtreets of Cairo. The night before, or 30th of Senne, is called at Cairo the Eide el Biſhaara, or the eve of good news, becauſe, after having meaſured at the Mikeas, they come and tell at Cairo that to-morrow they begin to count the Nile's riſing.

JULY.		INCHES.
7.	It rained from two in the afternoon till four, and from ten till midnight,	.318
10.	It rained yeſternight, and in the afternoon and night the day before,	.289
11.	It rained till yeſterday afternoon: in the night a violent ſhower that laſted 39 minutes; wind ſouth by weſt,	1.162
12.	It rained a little from two to three in the afternoon, but in the night violently for a ſhort time,	.319
13.	It rained yeſterday from three quarters paſt twelve till midnight; W. S. W. calm,	.912
14.	It rained all yeſterday afternoon till midnight,	.739
15.	It rained the 14th in the afternoon, and the 15th a few ſhowers through the day,	.816
16.	It rained in the night, and ſmall rain in the afternoon,	.290
17.	It rained in the afternoon two ſhowers, and in the night a little; S. W.	.212
19.	It rained in the afternoon the 17th and 18th, and the 18th only in the night,	.912
20.	It rained yeſterday from two till half paſt ten conſtant rain, and the hail lay all the afternoon on the hills S. E. of the town; very cold wind; S. by W.	1.371
21. & 22.	It rained but one ſmall ſhower the 20th, the 21ſt it rained little in the afternoon, but hard in the night,	1.185
24.	It rained in the morning of yeſterday only, fair in the afternoon; to-day, in the morning, fair in the night,	.766
25.	It rained all yeſterday afternoon, and all this morning ſmall rain, but none in the night,	.452
28.	From the 25th in the afternoon to this day at noon,	2.137
29.	From the 28th at noon to the 29th it rained in the firſt part of the night, but was fair all afternoon and this morning,	.267
	From the 29th at noon, to the 31ſt at ditto,	.568
	Total rain in July,	14.360

AUGUST.

		INCHES.
1.	It rained yeſterday afternoon, but in the night little. To day fair, -	.544
4.	It rained only the third in the evening, and night and this morning, -	1.188
5.	It rained yeſterday evening and in the night, till noon little, -	.544
6.	It rained yeſterday afternoon, and all night, and a little this morning, -	.250
8.	It was fair theſe two days, and only rained one hard ſhower laſt night, -	.178
9.	It rained laſt night only, was fair all day, and is this morning, -	.214
10.	It rained yeſterday all the afternoon, and the firſt of the night. To-day fair,	.869
11.	It rained in the night yeſterday; all day and this morning fair, - -	.188
12.	It rained a ſmall ſhower yeſterday afternoon, and in the night a little, -	.268
13.	It rained yeſterday at three a hard ſhower, and a little in the night, -	.308
14.	It rained a few drops in the day, and a hard ſhower at night, -	.360
15.	It rained a hard ſhower near three, and at ten at night, -	.386
16.	In the night, -	.027
17.	It rained hard ſeveral times in the evening and night, - -	.831
18.	It rained hard yeſterday afternoon, and in the night, - -	.329
19.	It rained all day, but not hard, -	.491
20.	It rained in the afternoon only, -	.010
21.	Ditto, - -	.097
22.	It was fair all yeſterday, and rained only a hard ſhower at 9, -	.424
23.	It rained hard at noon, and the evening, with little in-	

AUGUST.		INCHES.
	intervals, till 9 at night, and again this morning at ſun-riſe till 7, -	1.148
24.	It did not rain yeſterday, - -	—
25.	It rained an hour between two and three,	.332
26.	It rained a ſmall ſhower yeſterday, and none in the night, - -	.005
27.	It rained a hard ſhower at four, and this day at 12 morning, the night clear, -	.268
28.	It rained hard yeſterday at 2 for a few minutes,	.201
29.	It rained a hard ſhower for near an hour, after two, but clear all night and this morning,	450
30. & 31.	It rained a ſmall ſhower the 30th, and heavily for a quarter of an hour the 31ſt, at night, at ten,	.109
	Total rain in Auguſt,	10.019

SEPTEMBER.

2.	It rained yeſterday a hard ſhower in the evening, and at ten at night, -	.664
3.	It rained only a few drops, which did not appear in the funnel, - -	—
4.	It rained from noon till ſun-ſet yeſterday, with hard and violent thunder: night fair,	1.739
	N. B. It is obſerved at Gondar, the Pagomen is always rainy. It begins this year the 4th, and conſiſts of ſix days, being Leap Year.	
5.	It rained yeſterday all afternoon, ſmall rain,	.399
6.	It rained yeſterday all afternoon, and ſmall rain in the night till ten, -	.306
7.	It rained from before noon till four, ſmall rain; the night fair. Wind high at north,	.846
8.	It rained from noon for an hour, ſmall rain,	.214

SEPTEMBER.	INCHES.
9. It rained a ſmall ſhower at noon; clouds drive from eaſt to weſt; wind north, -	.107
10. Saint John's day, no rain, -	—
11. It rained from noon till five o'clock, wind W. cold; clouds drive from eaſt and weſt,	1.135
12. It rained a ſmart ſhower a little before noon. Clouds drive from eaſt and from weſt,	.214
13. It rained a ſmall ſhower a little after noon. Cold and calm. Clouds drive from eaſt and weſt,	.035
14. It rained ſmall rain from noon to three, and hard from eleven till near midnight, -	.344
15. It was fair all yeſterday, but rained hard for a few minutes at ſeven, and alſo a little before midnight, from the eaſt, -	.186
16. No rain to-day,	—
18. It rained a ſmall ſhower laſt night, and to-day at noon, - -	.053
19. It rained and hailed violently in the afternoon,	1.096
Total rain in September,	7.338

The rain totally ceaſed the 19th, none having fallen from this day to the 25th.

Saint John's day is the time obſerved for the rains beginning to abate.

N. B. At the 5th of October the people were all crying for rain; the ground all in cracks, and teff in the blade burnt up.

TOTAL

TOTAL *of* RAIN *that fell in* ABYSSINIA *in the Years* 1770 *and* 1771, *in the Rainy Months.*

GONDAR.

1770.

	INCHES.
March & April,	.039
May,	2.717
June,	4.307
July,	10.089
Auguſt,	15.569
September,	2.834
	35.555

KOSCAM.

1771.

	INCHES.
February, & March,	.664
April,	.085
May,	2.501
June,	6.388
July,	14.360
Auguſt,	10.019
September,	7.338
	41.355

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

BRITISH MUSEUM